Ultimate Michael Sugrue resources Book

HE WHO PLANTS A TREE
KNOWING THAT HE WILL
NEVER SIT UNDER ITS
SHADE, HAS AT LEAST
BEGUN TO UNDERSTAND
THE MEANING OF LIFE
-TAGORE

Foreword

I have combed through and gathered all of Michael Sugrue comments from his Youtube channel and other resources and compiled them all here as a way for myself and friends to read and remember the man, to many of us his scattered thoughts, comments and Lectures are like gold dust and are worth preserving. I have taken the task to gathered all of material that is from Michael Sugrue and related to him that I can find and gathered them all here in one place, Be it Comments,All of TTC Lectures Video/Audio (Ones that Michael appeared and did lecture) and recordings of lectures that I participate with him in the past Online Class starting in 2022 Ukraine Relief Course, his Podcast, News Articles, you will find them all here and download with the download/view link that is provided here.

I don't have any intention to make money or profit from all of these Material, if you want to support Please check out Michael Sugrue Youtube channel and become a member or Subscribe to his substacks, You can find all the links here.

All of Mike's The Idea Store Podcast Episode are on my youtube channel for ease of access: https://www.youtube.com/@acolus3413

If I miss anything, you got questions, or you have any new Material, be it some comments from him that I've missed or you are one of his past student and have some material of your own that you are willing to share for prosperity, Please let me know and contact via:

Email: tanakorn.corn@gmail.com
Discord: Acolus

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Tanakorn (Acolus)

27/04/2024

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Social Media, Download links, Recorded lectures and other

Youtube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/@dr.michaelsugrue

Substack: https://michaelsugrue.substack.com/

The Idea Store Podcast: https://archive.org/details/30.-humanities-seminar-presocratics-and-sophists

TTC course (All of em): https://archive.org/details/great-minds-of-the-western-intellectual-tradition-1st-ed

Ukraine Relief Course 2022 Recordings:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLklOJlycbSS00xFCTBf3gjYgOIGorcXc8

Greeks and Their Heroes Recordings:
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLklOJlycbSS3RDE1XcmbBFF5Dy7Arzo0S&si=yBTm0EtO0tDgn5CQ

Medical Doctors Course Recordings:
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLklOJlycbSS2W2D24UY4zh2Qw1Wrhmcr3&si=mTjiygvJL7C5ry05

History of the World course Recordings:
https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLklOJlycbSS00lhZZk51VMAd8-iBMLtcq&si=mTUVngsidNCERdIY

Symposium to Mike's Encomium Recording:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-MfqU4wj6M

My Youtube channel where I also uploaded all of The Idea Store podcast Episeodes:
https://www.youtube.com/@acolus3413/videos

Articles+News:

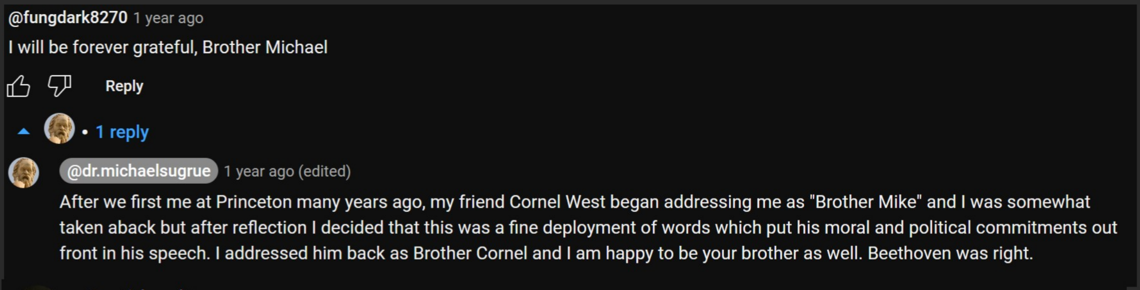
All- American Socrates: The Intellectual Legacy and teaching of Dr.Michael J Sugrue:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Izy6CqgWYdE&t=488s

The American Converative, Michael Sugrue: An Intellectual Life:
https://www.theamericanconservative.com/michael-sugrue-an-intellectual-life/

City Journal, Professor of Inspiration: https://www.city-journal.org/article/michael-sugrue-professor-of-inspiration

National Review, Eat Pray Western Civ: https://www.nationalreview.com/2024/02/eat-pray-western-civ/

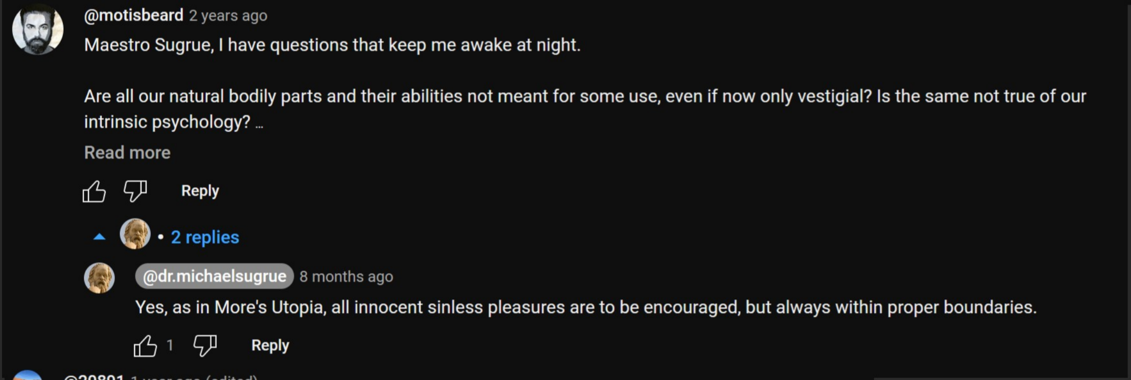
First video introduction to channel +Aurelius Lecture


@fungdark8270 1 year ago

I will be forever grateful, Brother Michael

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

After we first me at Princeton many years ago, my friend Cornel West began addressing me as "Brother Mike" and I was somewhat taken aback but after reflection I decided that this was a fine deployment of words which put his moral and political commitments out front in his speech. I addressed him back as Brother Cornel and I am happy to be your brother as well. Beethoven was right.


@motisbeard 2 years ago

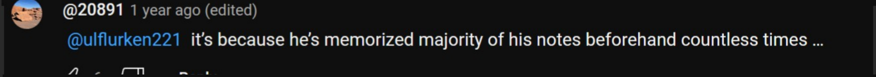
Maestro Sugrue, I have questions that keep me awake at night.

Are all our natural bodily parts and their abilities not meant for some use, even if now only vestigial? Is the same not true of our intrinsic psychology? …

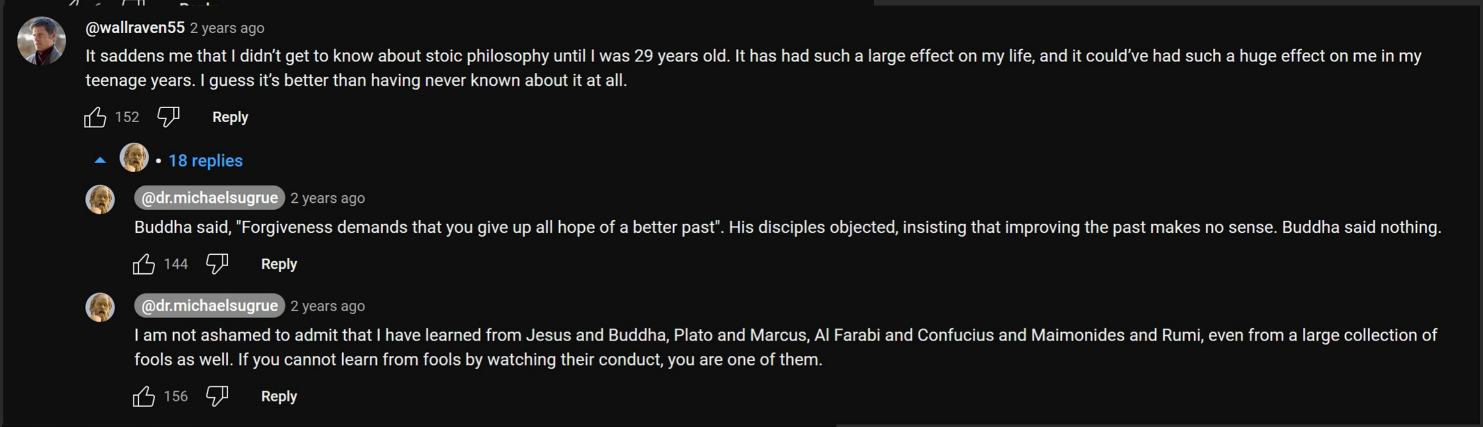
Read more

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Yes, as in More's Utopia, all innocent sinless pleasures are to be encouraged, but always within proper boundaries.


@20891 1 year ago (edited)

@ulflurken221 it's because he's memorized majority of his notes beforehand countless times …


@wallraven55 2 years ago

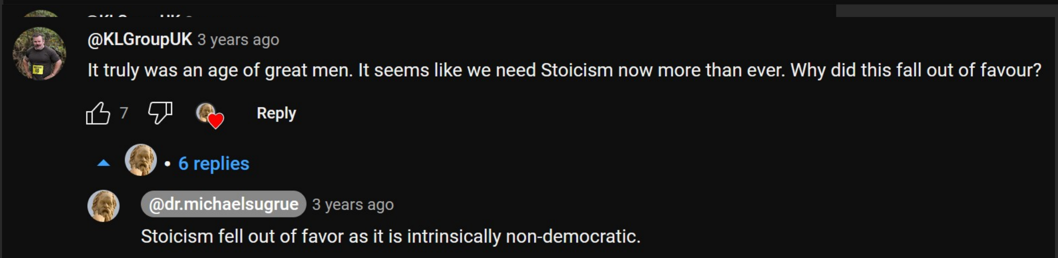
It saddens me that I didn't get to know about stoic philosophy until I was 29 years old. It has had such a large effect on my life, and it could've had such a huge effect on me in my teenage years. I guess it's better than having never known about it at all.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Buddha said, "Forgiveness demands that you give up all hope of a better past". His disciples objected, insisting that improving the past makes no sense. Buddha said nothing.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

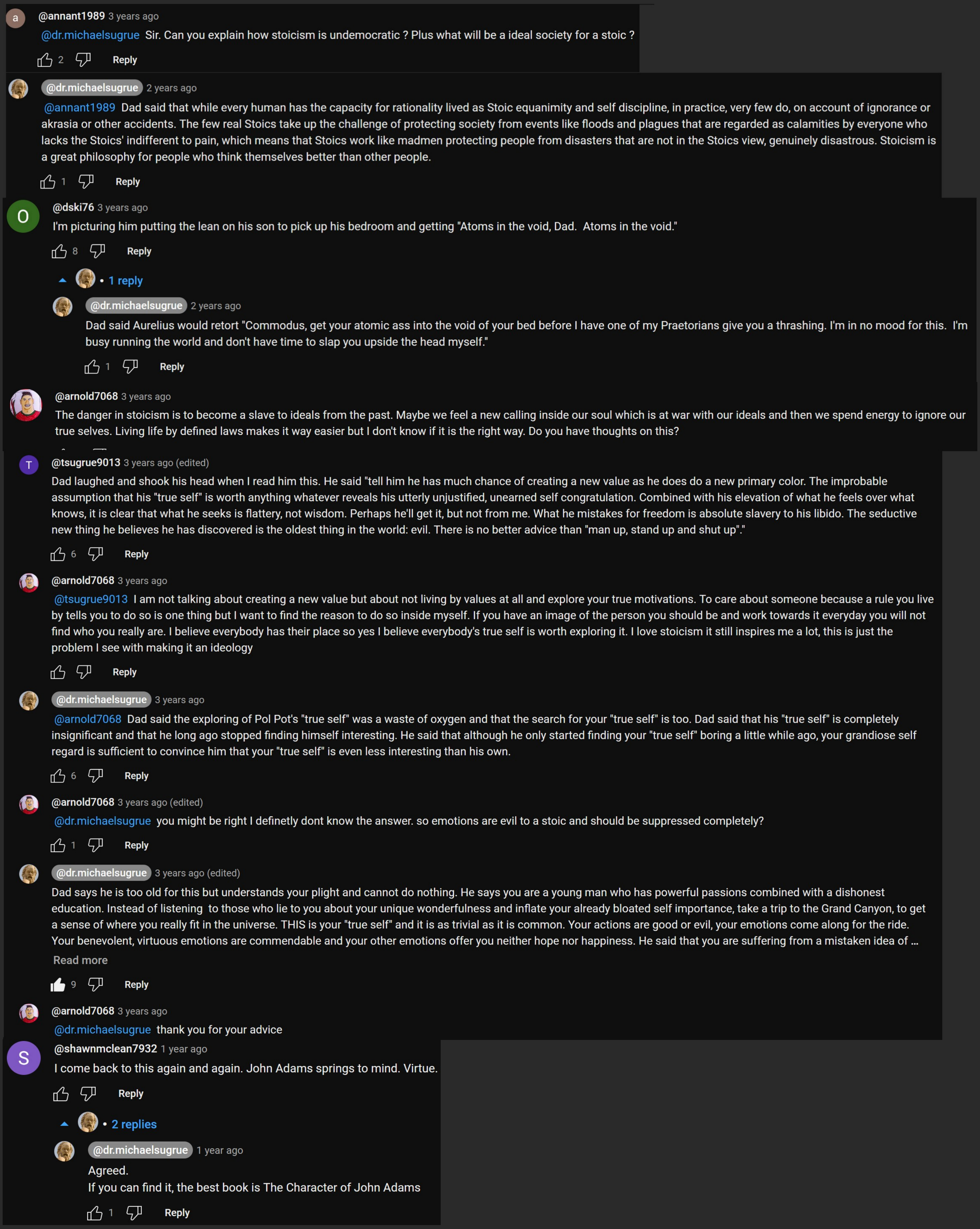
I am not ashamed to admit that I have learned from Jesus and Buddha, Plato and Marcus, Al Farabi and Confucius and Maimonides and Rumi, even from a large collection of fools as well. If you cannot learn from fools by watching their conduct, you are one of them.


@KLGroupUK 3 years ago

It truly was an age of great men. It seems like we need Stoicism now more than ever. Why did this fall out of favour?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

Stoicism fell out of favor as it is intrinsically non-democratic.



@annant1989 3 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Sir. Can you explain how stoicism is undemocratic ? Plus what will be a ideal society for a stoic ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@annant1989 Dad said that while every human has the capacity for rationality lived as Stoic equanimity and self discipline, in practice, very few do, on account of ignorance or akrasia or other accidents. The few real Stoics take up the challenge of protecting society from events like floods and plagues that are regarded as calamities by everyone who lacks the Stoics' indifferent to pain, which means that Stoics work like madmen protecting people from disasters that are not in the Stoics view, genuinely disastrous. Stoicism is a great philosophy for people who think themselves better than other people.

@dski76 3 years ago

I'm picturing him putting the lean on his son to pick up his bedroom and getting "Atoms in the void, Dad. Atoms in the void."

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said Aurelius would retort "Commodus, get your atomic ass into the void of your bed before I have one of my Praetorians give you a thrashing. I'm in no mood for this. I'm busy running the world and don't have time to slap you upside the head myself."

@arnold7068 3 years ago

The danger in stoicism is to become a slave to ideals from the past. Maybe we feel a new calling inside our soul which is at war with our ideals and then we spend energy to ignore our true selves. Living life by defined laws makes it way easier but I don't know if it is the right way. Do you have thoughts on this?

@tsugrue9013 3 years ago (edited)

Dad laughed and shook his head when I read him this. He said "tell him he has much chance of creating a new value as he does do a new primary color. The improbable assumption that his "true self" is worth anything whatever reveals his utterly unjustified, unearned self congratulation. Combined with his elevation of what he feels over what knows, it is clear that what he seeks is flattery, not wisdom. Perhaps he'll get it, but not from me. What he mistakes for freedom is absolute slavery to his libido. The seductive new thing he believes he has discovered is the oldest thing in the world: evil. There is no better advice than "man up, stand up and shut up"."

@arnold7068 3 years ago

@tsugrue9013 I am not talking about creating a new value but about not living by values at all and explore your true motivations. To care about someone because a rule you live by tells you to do so is one thing but I want to find the reason to do so inside myself. If you have an image of the person you should be and work towards it everyday you will not find who you really are. I believe everybody has their place so yes I believe everybody's true self is worth exploring it. I love stoicism it still inspires me a lot, this is just the problem I see with making it an ideology

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

@arnold7068 Dad said the exploring of Pol Pot's "true self" was a waste of oxygen and that the search for your "true self" is too. Dad said that his "true self" is completely insignificant and that he long ago stopped finding himself interesting. He said that although he only started finding your "true self" boring a little while ago, your grandiose self regard is sufficient to convince him that your "true self" is even less interesting than his own.

@arnold7068 3 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue you might be right I definetly dont know the answer. so emotions are evil to a stoic and should be suppressed completely?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago (edited)

Dad says he is too old for this but understands your plight and cannot do nothing. He says you are a young man who has powerful passions combined with a dishonest education. Instead of listening to those who lie to you about your unique wonderfulness and inflate your already bloated self importance, take a trip to the Grand Canyon, to get a sense of where you really fit in the universe. THIS is your "true self" and it is as trivial as it is common. Your actions are good or evil, your emotions come along for the ride. Your benevolent, virtuous emotions are commendable and your other emotions offer you neither hope nor happiness. He said that you are suffering from a mistaken idea of ...

Read more

@arnold7068 3 years ago

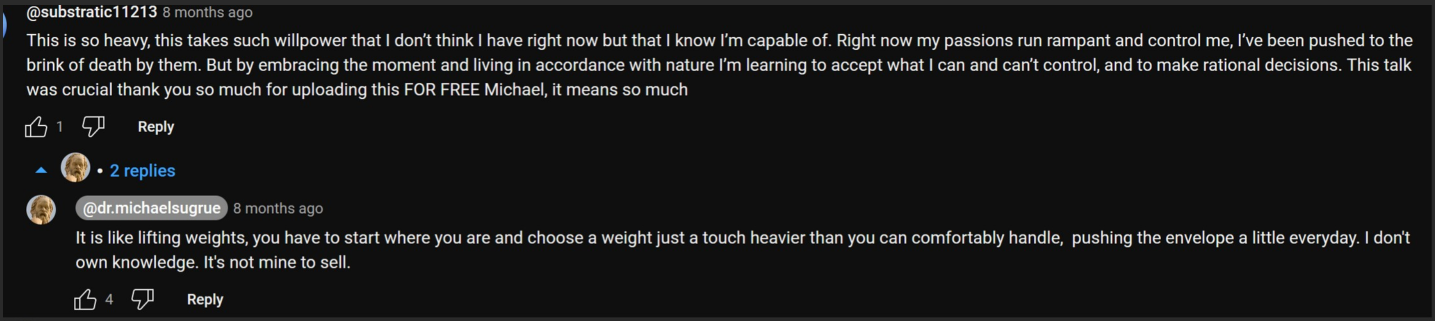
@dr.michaelsugrue thank you for your advice

@shawnmclean7932 1 year ago

I come back to this again and again. John Adams springs to mind. Virtue.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Agreed.
If you can find it, the best book is The Character of John Adams

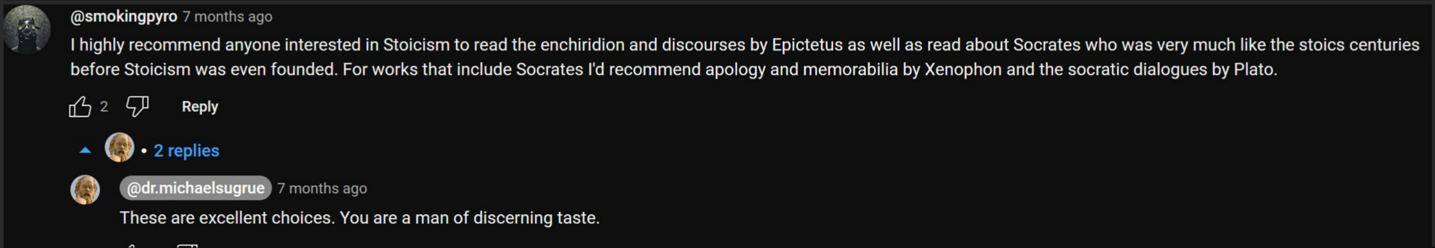


@substratic11213 8 months ago

This is so heavy, this takes such willpower that I don't think I have right now but that I know I'm capable of. Right now my passions run rampant and control me, I've been pushed to the brink of death by them. But by embracing the moment and living in accordance with nature I'm learning to accept what I can and can't control, and to make rational decisions. This talk was crucial thank you so much for uploading this FOR FREE Michael, it means so much

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

It is like lifting weights, you have to start where you are and choose a weight just a touch heavier than you can comfortably handle, pushing the envelope a little everyday. I don't own knowledge. It's not mine to sell.

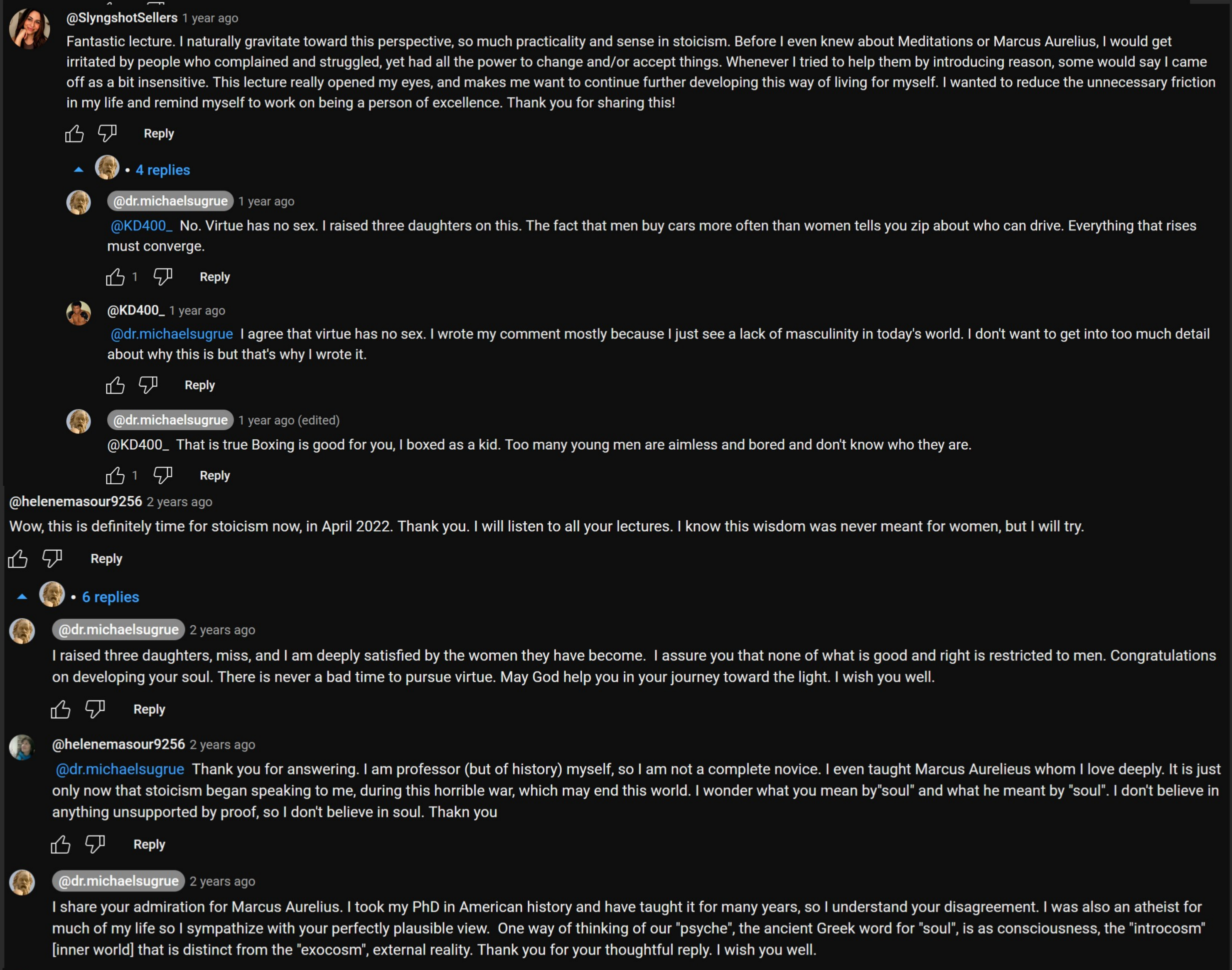


@smokingpyro 7 months ago

I highly recommend anyone interested in Stoicism to read the enchiridion and discourses by Epictetus as well as read about Socrates who was very much like the stoics centuries before Stoicism was even founded. For works that include Socrates I'd recommend apology and memorabilia by Xenophon and the socratic dialogues by Plato.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

These are excellent choices. You are a man of discerning taste.



@SlyngshotSellers 1 year ago

Fantastic lecture. I naturally gravitate toward this perspective, so much practicality and sense in stoicism. Before I even knew about Meditations or Marcus Aurelius, I would get irritated by people who complained and struggled, yet had all the power to change and/or accept things. Whenever I tried to help them by introducing reason, some would say I came off as a bit insensitive. This lecture really opened my eyes, and makes me want to continue further developing this way of living for myself. I wanted to reduce the unnecessary friction in my life and remind myself to work on being a person of excellence. Thank you for sharing this!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@KD400_ No. Virtue has no sex. I raised three daughters on this. The fact that men buy cars more often than women tells you zip about who can drive. Everything that rises must converge.

@KD400_ 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I agree that virtue has no sex. I wrote my comment mostly because I just see a lack of masculinity in today's world. I don't want to get into too much detail about why this is but that's why I wrote it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

@KD400_ That is true Boxing is good for you, I boxed as a kid. Too many young men are aimless and bored and don't know who they are.

@helenemasour9256 2 years ago

Wow, this is definitely time for stoicism now, in April 2022. Thank you. I will listen to all your lectures. I know this wisdom was never meant for women, but I will try.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

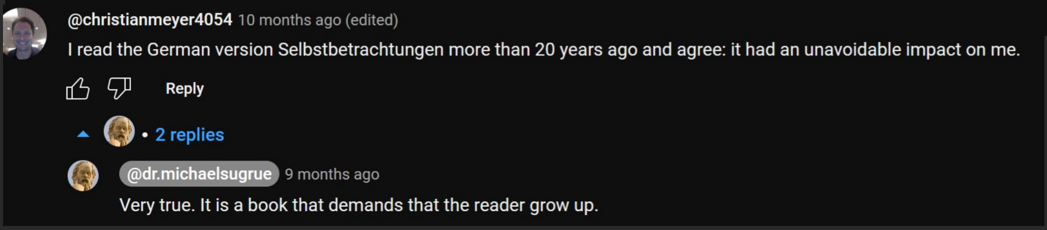
I raised three daughters, miss, and I am deeply satisfied by the women they have become. I assure you that none of what is good and right is restricted to men. Congratulations on developing your soul. There is never a bad time to pursue virtue. May God help you in your journey toward the light. I wish you well.

@helenemasour9256 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Thank you for answering. I am professor (but of history) myself, so I am not a complete novice. I even taught Marcus Aurelieus whom I love deeply. It is just only now that stoicism began speaking to me, during this horrible war, which may end this world. I wonder what you mean by"soul" and what he meant by "soul". I don't believe in anything unsupported by proof, so I don't believe in soul. Thakn you

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

I share your admiration for Marcus Aurelius. I took my PhD in American history and have taught it for many years, so I understand your disagreement. I was also an atheist for much of my life so I sympathize with your perfectly plausible view. One way of thinking of our "psyche", the ancient Greek word for "soul", is as consciousness, the "introcosm" [inner world] that is distinct from the "exocosm", external reality. Thank you for your thoughtful reply. I wish you well.

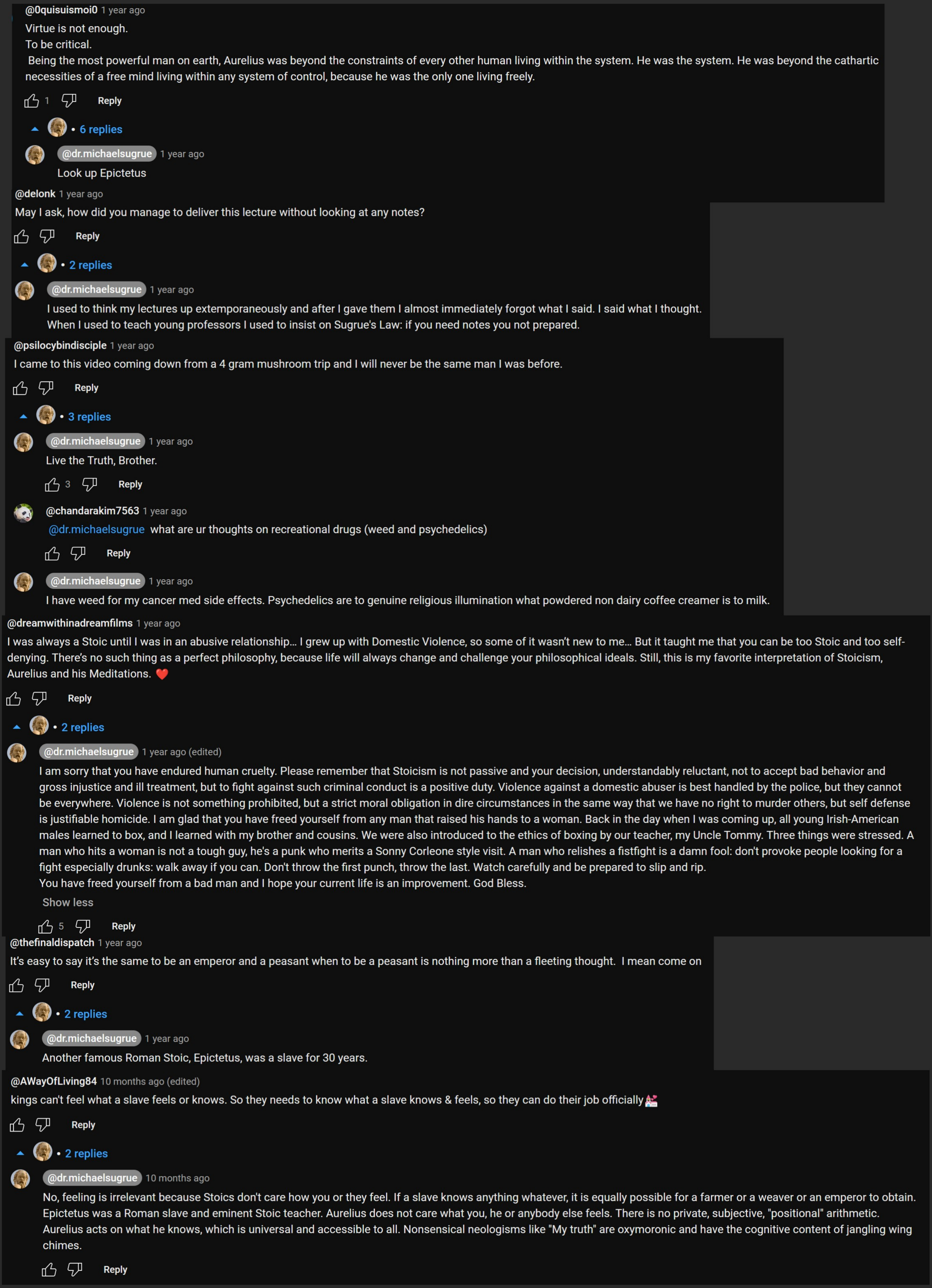


@christianmeyer4054 10 months ago (edited)

I read the German version Selbstbetrachtungen more than 20 years ago and agree: it had an unavoidable impact on me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Very true. It is a book that demands that the reader grow up.



@0quisuismoi0 1 year ago

Virtue is not enough.
To be critical.
Being the most powerful man on earth, Aurelius was beyond the constraints of every other human living within the system. He was the system. He was beyond the cathartic necessities of a free mind living within any system of control, because he was the only one living freely.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Look up Epictetus

@delonk 1 year ago

May I ask, how did you manage to deliver this lecture without looking at any notes?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I used to think my lectures up extemporaneously and after I gave them I almost immediately forgot what I said. I said what I thought.
When I used to teach young professors I used to insist on Sugrue's Law: if you need notes you not prepared.

@psilocybindisciple 1 year ago

I came to this video coming down from a 4 gram mushroom trip and I will never be the same man I was before.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Live the Truth, Brother.

@chandarakim7563 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue what are ur thoughts on recreational drugs (weed and psychedelics)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have weed for my cancer med side effects. Psychedelics are to genuine religious illumination what powdered non dairy coffee creamer is to milk.

@dreamwithinadreamfilms 1 year ago

I was always a Stoic until I was in an abusive relationship… I grew up with Domestic Violence, so some of it wasn't new to me… But it taught me that you can be too Stoic and too self-denying. There's no such thing as a perfect philosophy, because life will always change and challenge your philosophical ideals. Still, this is my favorite interpretation of Stoicism, Aurelius and his Meditations. ❤️

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I am sorry that you have endured human cruelty. Please remember that Stoicism is not passive and your decision, understandably reluctant, not to accept bad behavior and gross injustice and ill treatment, but to fight against such criminal conduct is a positive duty. Violence against a domestic abuser is best handled by the police, but they cannot be everywhere. Violence is not something prohibited, but a strict moral obligation in dire circumstances in the same way that we have no right to murder others, but self defense is justifiable homicide. I am glad that you have freed yourself from any man that raised his hands to a woman. Back in the day when I was coming up, all young Irish-American males learned to box, and I learned with my brother and cousins. We were also introduced to the ethics of boxing by our teacher, my Uncle Tommy. Three things were stressed. A man who hits a woman is not a tough guy, he's a punk who merits a Sonny Corleone style visit. A man who relishes a fistfight is a damn fool: don't provoke people looking for a fight especially drunks: walk away if you can. Don't throw the first punch, throw the last. Watch carefully and be prepared to slip and rip.
You have freed yourself from a bad man and I hope your current life is an improvement. God Bless.

@thefinaldispatch 1 year ago

It's easy to say it's the same to be an emperor and a peasant when to be a peasant is nothing more than a fleeting thought. I mean come on

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

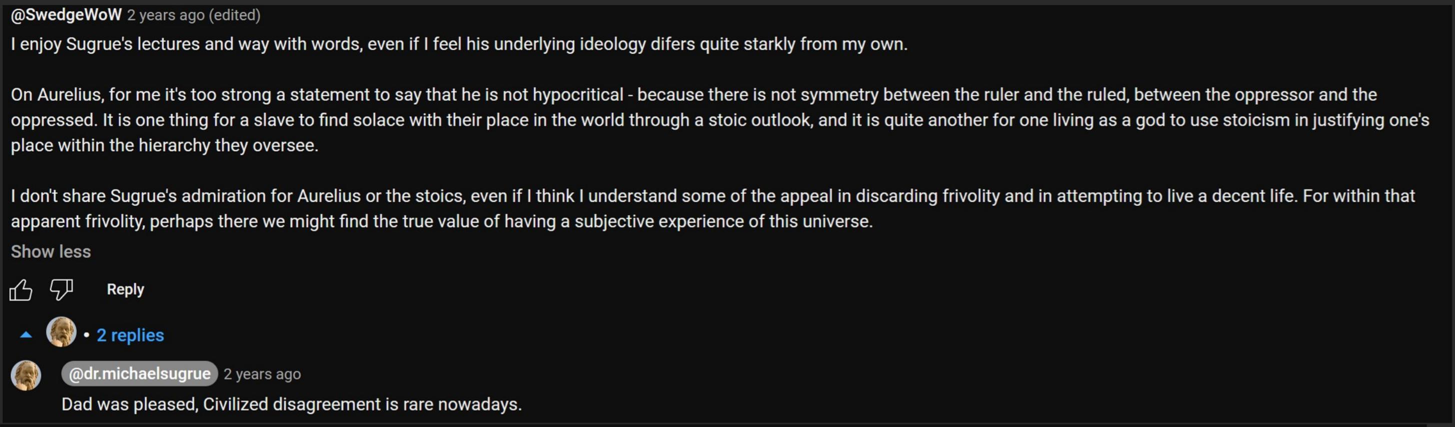
Another famous Roman Stoic, Epictetus, was a slave for 30 years.

@AWayOfLiving84 10 months ago (edited)

kings can't feel what a slave feels or knows. So they needs to know what a slave knows & feels, so they can do their job officially💒

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

No, feeling is irrelevant because Stoics don't care how you or they feel. If a slave knows anything whatever, it is equally possible for a farmer or a weaver or an emperor to obtain. Epictetus was a Roman slave and eminent Stoic teacher. Aurelius does not care what you, he or anybody else feels. There is no private, subjective, "positional" arithmetic. Aurelius acts on what he knows, which is universal and accessible to all. Nonsensical neologisms like "My truth" are oxymoronic and have the cognitive content of jangling wing chimes.



@SwedgeWoW 2 years ago (edited)

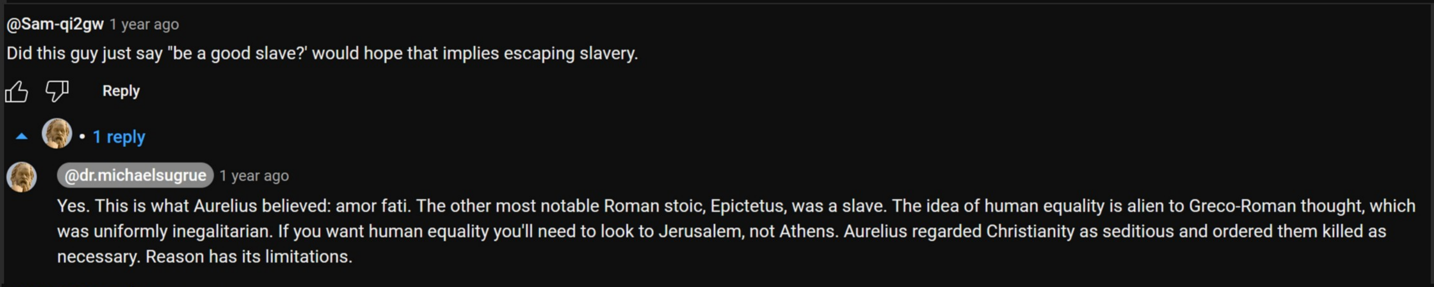
I enjoy Sugrue's lectures and way with words, even if I feel his underlying ideology difers quite starkly from my own.

On Aurelius, for me it's too strong a statement to say that he is not hypocritical - because there is not symmetry between the ruler and the ruled, between the oppressor and the oppressed. It is one thing for a slave to find solace with their place in the world through a stoic outlook, and it is quite another for one living as a god to use stoicism in justifying one's place within the hierarchy they oversee.

I don't share Sugrue's admiration for Aurelius or the stoics, even if I think I understand some of the appeal in discarding frivolity and in attempting to live a decent life. For within that apparent frivolity, perhaps there we might find the true value of having a subjective experience of this universe.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad was pleased, Civilized disagreement is rare nowadays.

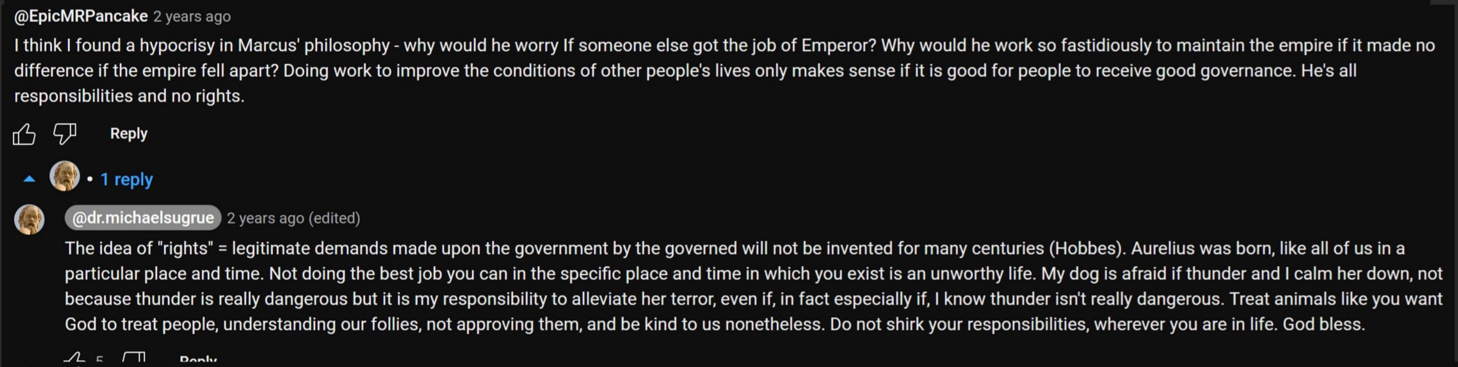


@Sam-qi2gw 1 year ago

Did this guy just say "be a good slave?' would hope that implies escaping slavery.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes. This is what Aurelius believed: amor fati. The other most notable Roman stoic, Epictetus, was a slave. The idea of human equality is alien to Greco-Roman thought, which was uniformly inegalitarian. If you want human equality you'll need to look to Jerusalem, not Athens. Aurelius regarded Christianity as seditious and ordered them killed as necessary. Reason has its limitations.

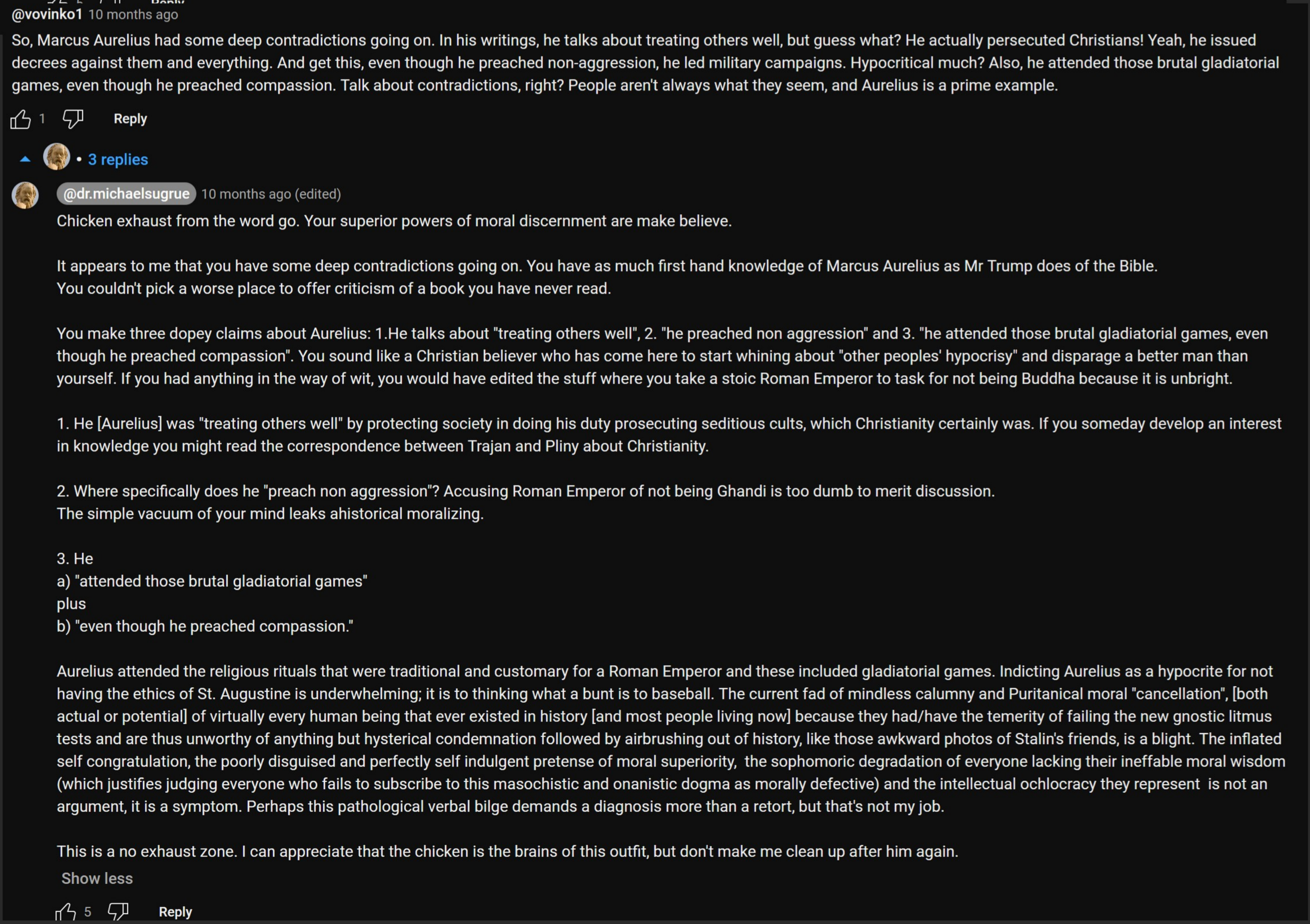


@EpicMRPancake 2 years ago

I think I found a hypocrisy in Marcus' philosophy - why would he worry If someone else got the job of Emperor? Why would he work so fastidiously to maintain the empire if it made no difference if the empire fell apart? Doing work to improve the conditions of other people's lives only makes sense if it is good for people to receive good governance. He's all responsibilities and no rights.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

The idea of "rights" = legitimate demands made upon the government by the governed will not be invented for many centuries (Hobbes). Aurelius was born, like all of us in a particular place and time. Not doing the best job you can in the specific place and time in which you exist is an unworthy life. My dog is afraid if thunder and I calm her down, not because thunder is really dangerous but it is my responsibility to alleviate her terror, even if, in fact especially if, I know thunder isn't really dangerous. Treat animals like you want God to treat people, understanding our follies, not approving them, and be kind to us nonetheless. Do not shirk your responsibilities, wherever you are in life. God bless.



@vovinko1 10 months ago

So, Marcus Aurelius had some deep contradictions going on. In his writings, he talks about treating others well, but guess what? He actually persecuted Christians! Yeah, he issued decrees against them and everything. And get this, even though he preached non-aggression, he led military campaigns. Hypocritical much? Also, he attended those brutal gladiatorial games, even though he preached compassion. Talk about contradictions, right? People aren't always what they seem, and Aurelius is a prime example.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Chicken exhaust from the word go. Your superior powers of moral discernment are make believe.

It appears to me that you have some deep contradictions going on. You have as much first hand knowledge of Marcus Aurelius as Mr Trump does of the Bible.
You couldn't pick a worse place to offer criticism of a book you have never read.

You make three dopey claims about Aurelius: 1.He talks about "treating others well", 2. "he preached non aggression" and 3. "he attended those brutal gladiatorial games, even though he preached compassion". You sound like a Christian believer who has come here to start whining about "other peoples' hypocrisy" and disparage a better man than yourself. If you had anything in the way of wit, you would have edited the stuff where you take a stoic Roman Emperor to task for not being Buddha because it is unbright.

1. He [Aurelius] was "treating others well" by protecting society in doing his duty prosecuting seditious cults, which Christianity certainly was. If you someday develop an interest in knowledge you might read the correspondence between Trajan and Pliny about Christianity.

2. Where specifically does he "preach non aggression"? Accusing Roman Emperor of not being Ghandi is too dumb to merit discussion.
The simple vacuum of your mind leaks ahistorical moralizing.

3. He
a) "attended those brutal gladiatorial games"
plus
b) "even though he preached compassion."

Aurelius attended the religious rituals that were traditional and customary for a Roman Emperor and these included gladiatorial games. Indicting Aurelius as a hypocrite for not having the ethics of St. Augustine is underwhelming; it is to thinking what a bunt is to baseball. The current fad of mindless calumny and Puritanical moral "cancellation", [both actual or potential] of virtually every human being that ever existed in history [and most people living now] because they had/have the temerity of failing the new gnostic litmus tests and are thus unworthy of anything but hysterical condemnation followed by airbrushing out of history, like those awkward photos of Stalin's friends, is a blight. The inflated self congratulation, the poorly disguised and perfectly self indulgent pretense of moral superiority, the sophomoric degradation of everyone lacking their ineffable moral wisdom (which justifies judging everyone who fails to subscribe to this masochistic and onanistic dogma as morally defective) and the intellectual ochlocracy they represent is not an argument, it is a symptom. Perhaps this pathological verbal bilge demands a diagnosis more than a retort, but that's not my job.

This is a no exhaust zone. I can appreciate that the chicken is the brains of this outfit, but don't make me clean up after him again.

@letyvasquez2025 1 year ago

So Marcus avoiding whining by whining about winers, and whiners.

1
Reply
10 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Don't get cute, there is zero whining here. Marcus wrote these meditations to himself to keep virtue foremost in his psyche. Marcus asked that all his papers be burned after his death but when people found the notes he had written to himself, they couldn't bring themselves to destroy them.

@letyvasquez2025 1 year ago

Should I employ the Stoic method of non whining by silently accepting your counter and internally wrestle with the ramifications in true Aurelian fashion?

Pardon the tautology

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@letyvasquez2025 No, asking questions is the sign of a capable mind. You are a smart listener. You are not obligated to agree with Marcus, nobody is, but right or wrong, he has earned respect not some adolescent flip off.

@letyvasquez2025 1 year ago

I replace your adolescent with dull-lescent, and respectfully accept that Marcus would be wholly unconcerned.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@letyvasquez2025 I don't know what "dul-lescent" means and and I am confident that Marcus would not be concerned. He didn't write the above, I did, because I'm a teacher. Marcus was a superior man and ignorant calumny is a childish affront both reason and taste.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@letyvasquez2025 That is beautiful.

@filipfedorisin3457 10 months ago

I happen to have read the meditations before this video, the points have strongly resonated with me but this man hit everything spot on and all of the stuff just made a lot of sense after watching this. Thank you man, you surely changed me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Aurelius is trying to talk you into being a genuine friend to yourself

@mathmanmrt 2 years ago

i discovered your videos a few months ago when i was looking for a way past come of the difficulties i was having with hegel. i had read **the phenomenology of the geist** while i was in a skilled nursing home recovering from septic shock. at the time i wasn't certain if the difficulties were because of my inability to comprehend what i was reading or whether they derived from my greatly weakened condition. because of this uncertainty i began rereading it a few months ago and lo, i found i had many of the same difficulties. your video clarified things enough in under an hour that i was able to finish reading the work with a modest improvement in my understanding. i believe it helped me to raise my comprehension from 10% to, perhaps, as much as 40%. i could not claim to be in any way expert on the work but i felt i was at least conversant about it. that was my introduction to your very fine series of videos.

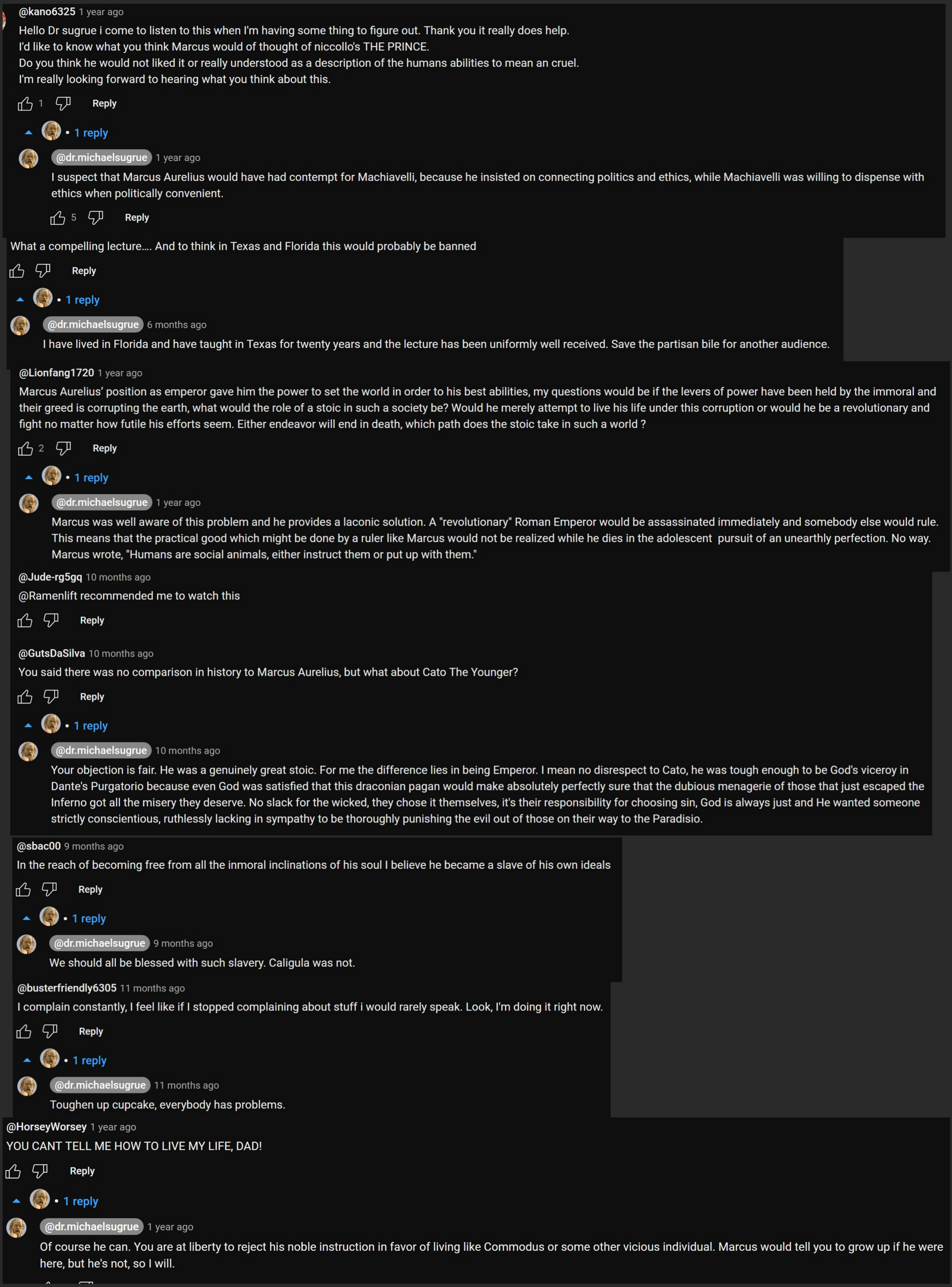
i have watched many of your other videos now, beginning with those philosophers i had previously read to see how your understanding of them compared to my own. eventually i started watching those of authors i had not yet read to see if i might wish to do so. through it all, i have watched and rewatched this video about marcus aurelius. his work has a special resonance for me. i discovered his **meditations** when i was in my early 30s, a time when i was coming to some important realizations about myself and life. in many ways i found his views of life, especially his conception of what it means to live an ethical life to be harshly comforting. i began incorporating a secular version of his philosophy into my own idiosyncratic philosophy of living. like you, i found his ability to live the ethical life despite the enormous weight of wealth, privilege, and power he wielded to be something like a rebuke to my own efforts to live such a life.

as time has passed, i am now 60, i still work towards maintaining an ethical life and maintaining my conception of the stoic virtues. this has been exceptionally helpful at the most difficult points in my life. last summer, in july of 2021, i had been given a cancer diagnosis and i was undergoing chemotherapy. after the first cycle i found myself stricken with an extreme case of post-chemo diarrhea and ended up near death in the i.c.u. of my local hospital. for the first three days of my stay i was quite literally helpless, unable to do anything for myself. almost the only thing i had any control over was my mind and within the confines of my mind i was at peace. i had dealt with everything over which i could exert control--i had chosen to get chemotherapy, i had gotten my family to hospitalize me because i had become so depleted--everything else was beyond my control and i found i could not worry over that. i truly felt no fear, not because i had any kind of death wish but because at that point the my survival was not in my control and i knew it would be folly to fret over it.

clearly, i did survive. i completed my four cycles of chemotherapy and i have been in remission since the completion. i will have ct-scans and blood work periodically for the rest of my life. i'd be lying if i said i were anything other than happy about that. i felt the need to share this because, given your clear admiration for marcus aurelius, i thought it might be something you could understand. the stoic conception is not one that seems particularly popular in this age. indeed, my younger son found my composure while i was in the hospital to be close to infuriating and described it as "bullshit". while he was the most vocal, some of his sentiments were shared by some of my family and friends. i am a musician and a composer. while i was engaged in my third cycle of chemo i composed this work to represent the feeling of being hooked up to i.v.s for hours at a go-- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZ33NoqRy2g

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I liked your composition, the steady drip drip drip rendered audible was a fine touch. I did surgery, max allowable radiation and 8 rounds of chemo, so I know how good a friend our dead emperor is.



@kano6325 1 year ago

Hello Dr sugrue i come to listen to this when I'm having some thing to figure out. Thank you it really does help.
I'd like to know what you think Marcus would of thought of niccollo's THE PRINCE.
Do you think he would not liked it or really understood as a description of the humans abilities to mean an cruel.
I'm really looking forward to hearing what you think about this.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I suspect that Marcus Aurelius would have had contempt for Machiavelli, because he insisted on connecting politics and ethics, while Machiavelli was willing to dispense with ethics when politically convenient.

What a compelling lecture.... And to think in Texas and Florida this would probably be banned

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

I have lived in Florida and have taught in Texas for twenty years and the lecture has been uniformly well received. Save the partisan bile for another audience.

@Lionfang1720 1 year ago

Marcus Aurelius' position as emperor gave him the power to set the world in order to his best abilities, my questions would be if the levers of power have been held by the immoral and their greed is corrupting the earth, what would the role of a stoic in such a society be? Would he merely attempt to live his life under this corruption or would he be a revolutionary and fight no matter how futile his efforts seem. Either endeavor will end in death, which path does the stoic take in such a world ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Marcus was well aware of this problem and he provides a laconic solution. A "revolutionary" Roman Emperor would be assassinated immediately and somebody else would rule. This means that the practical good which might be done by a ruler like Marcus would not be realized while he dies in the adolescent pursuit of an unearthly perfection. No way. Marcus wrote, "Humans are social animals, either instruct them or put up with them."

@Jude-rg5gq 10 months ago

@Ramenlift recommended me to watch this

@GutsDaSilva 10 months ago

You said there was no comparison in history to Marcus Aurelius, but what about Cato The Younger?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Your objection is fair. He was a genuinely great stoic. For me the difference lies in being Emperor. I mean no disrespect to Cato, he was tough enough to be God's viceroy in Dante's Purgatorio because even God was satisfied that this draconian pagan would make absolutely perfectly sure that the dubious menagerie of those that just escaped the Inferno got all the misery they deserve. No slack for the wicked, they chose it themselves, it's their responsibility for choosing sin, God is always just and He wanted someone strictly conscientious, ruthlessly lacking in sympathy to be thoroughly punishing the evil out of those on their way to the Paradisio.

@sbac00 9 months ago

In the reach of becoming free from all the inmoral inclinations of his soul I believe he became a slave of his own ideals

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

We should all be blessed with such slavery. Caligula was not.

@busterfriendly6305 11 months ago

I complain constantly, I feel like if I stopped complaining about stuff i would rarely speak. Look, I'm doing it right now.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

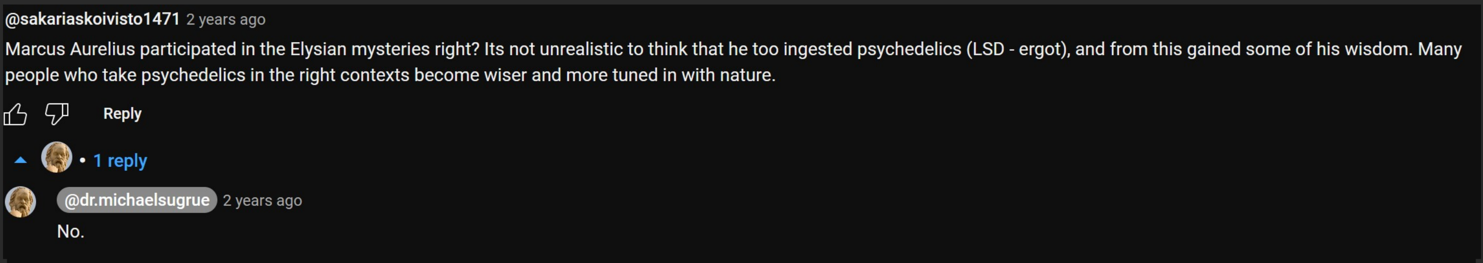
Toughen up cupcake, everybody has problems.

@HorseyWorsey 1 year ago

YOU CANT TELL ME HOW TO LIVE MY LIFE, DAD!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Of course he can. You are at liberty to reject his noble instruction in favor of living like Commodus or some other vicious individual. Marcus would tell you to grow up if he were here, but he's not, so I will.

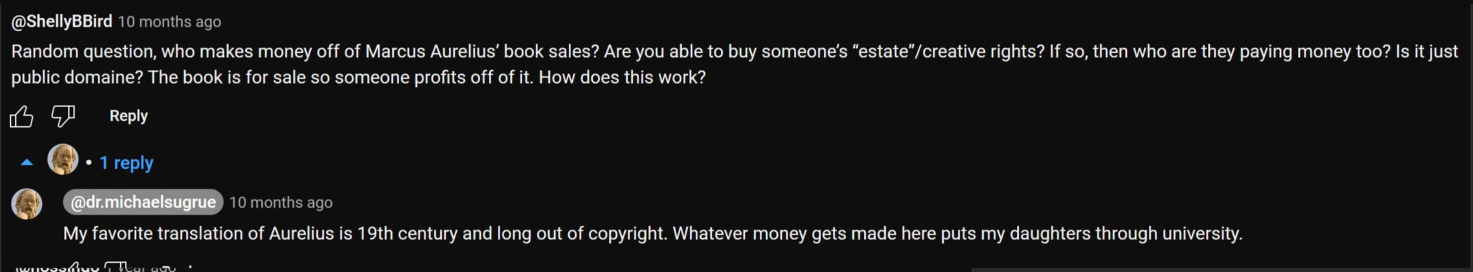


@sakariaskoivisto1471 2 years ago

Marcus Aurelius participated in the Elysian mysteries right? Its not unrealistic to think that he too ingested psychedelics (LSD - ergot), and from this gained some of his wisdom. Many people who take psychedelics in the right contexts become wiser and more tuned in with nature.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

No.

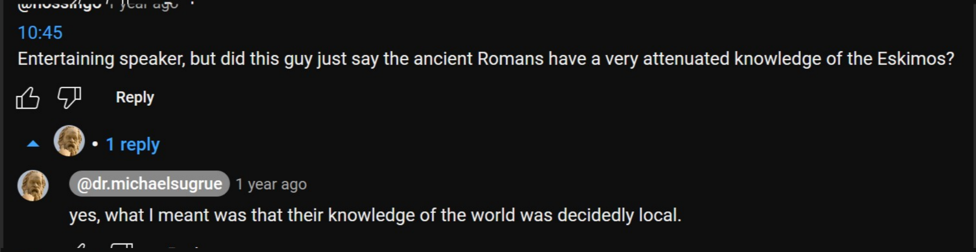


@ShellyBBird 10 months ago

Random question, who makes money off of Marcus Aurelius' book sales? Are you able to buy someone's "estate"/creative rights? If so, then who are they paying money too? Is it just public domaine? The book is for sale so someone profits off of it. How does this work?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

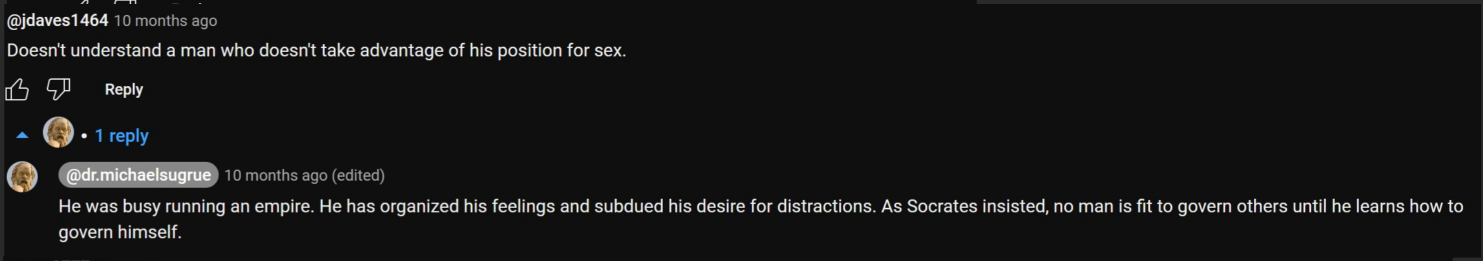
My favorite translation of Aurelius is 19th century and long out of copyright. Whatever money gets made here puts my daughters through university.



10:45
Entertaining speaker, but did this guy just say the ancient Romans have a very attenuated knowledge of the Eskimos?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

yes, what I meant was that their knowledge of the world was decidedly local.

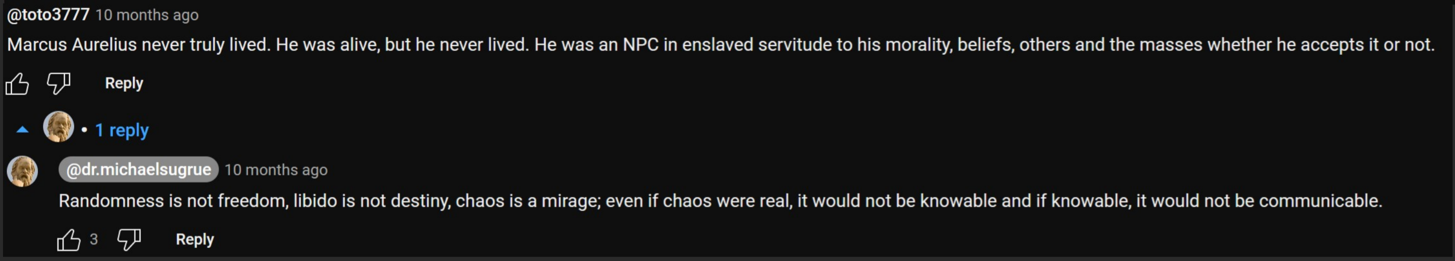


@jdaves1464 10 months ago

Doesn't understand a man who doesn't take advantage of his position for sex.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

He was busy running an empire. He has organized his feelings and subdued his desire for distractions. As Socrates insisted, no man is fit to govern others until he learns how to govern himself.



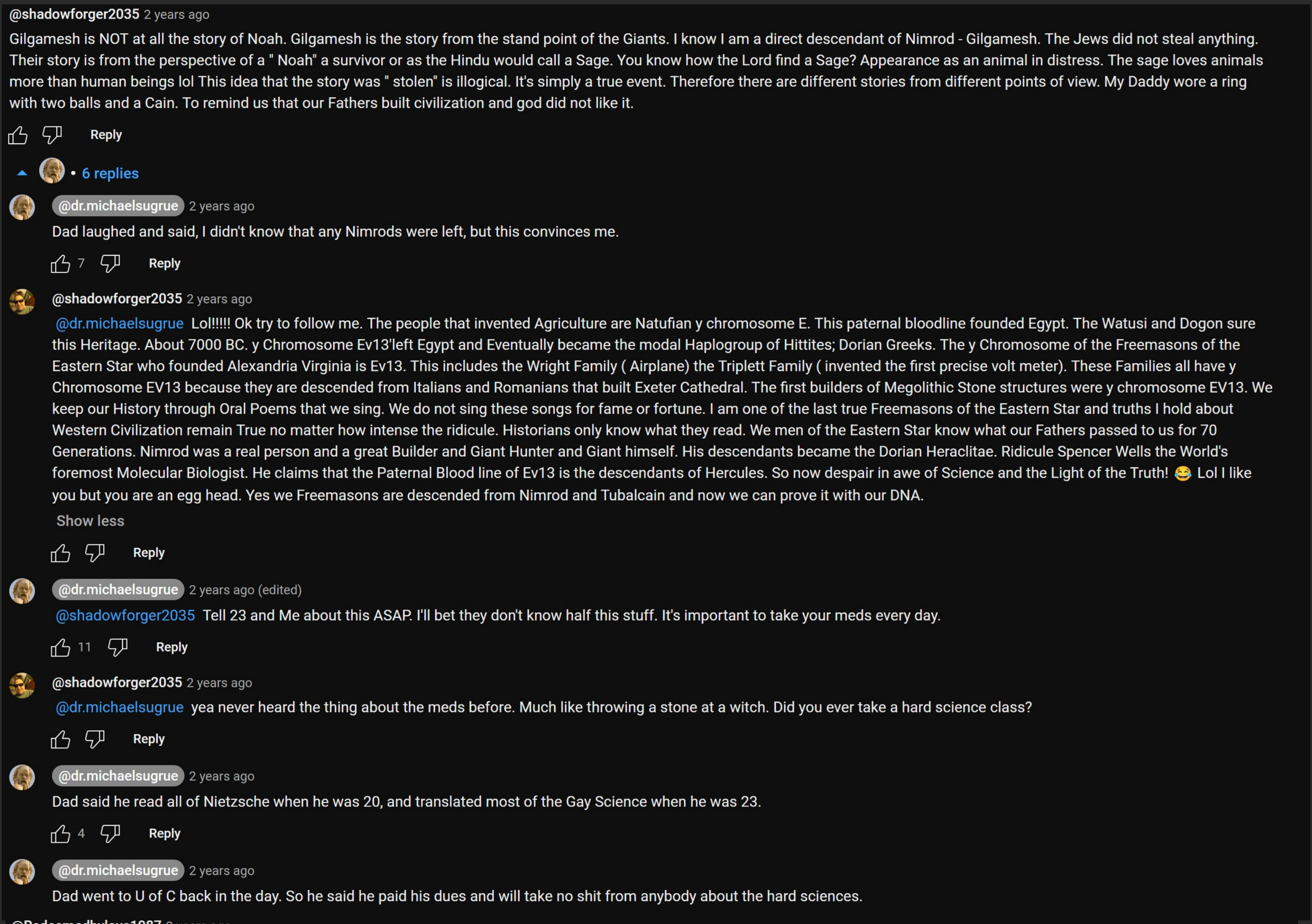
@toto3777 10 months ago

Marcus Aurelius never truly lived. He was alive, but he never lived. He was an NPC in enslaved servitude to his morality, beliefs, others and the masses whether he accepts it or not.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Randomness is not freedom, libido is not destiny, chaos is a mirage; even if chaos were real, it would not be knowable and if knowable, it would not be communicable.

The Bible and Western Culture - Gilgamesh



@shadowforger2035 2 years ago

Gilgamesh is NOT at all the story of Noah. Gilgamesh is the story from the stand point of the Giants. I know I am a direct descendant of Nimrod - Gilgamesh. The Jews did not steal anything. Their story is from the perspective of a " Noah" a survivor or as the Hindu would call a Sage. You know how the Lord find a Sage? Appearance as an animal in distress. The sage loves animals more than human beings lol This idea that the story was " stolen" is illogical. It's simply a true event. Therefore there are different stories from different points of view. My Daddy wore a ring with two balls and a Cain. To remind us that our Fathers built civilization and god did not like it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed and said, I didn't know that any Nimrods were left, but this convinces me.

@shadowforger2035 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Lol!!!!! Ok try to follow me. The people that invented Agriculture are Natufian y chromosome E. This paternal bloodline founded Egypt. The Watusi and Dogon sure this Heritage. About 7000 BC. y Chromosome Ev13'left Egypt and Eventually became the modal Haplogroup of Hittites; Dorian Greeks. The y Chromosome of the Freemasons of the Eastern Star who founded Alexandria Virginia is Ev13. This includes the Wright Family (Airplane) the Triplett Family (invented the first precise volt meter). These Families all have y Chromosome EV13 because they are descended from Italians and Romanians that built Exeter Cathedral. The first builders of Megolithic Stone structures were y chromosome EV13. We keep our History through Oral Poems that we sing. We do not sing these songs for fame or fortune. I am one of the last true Freemasons of the Eastern Star and truths I hold about Western Civilization remain True no matter how intense the ridicule. Historians only know what they read. We men of the Eastern Star know what our Fathers passed to us for 70 Generations. Nimrod was a real person and a great Builder and Giant Hunter and Giant himself. His descendants became the Dorian Heraclitae. Ridicule Spencer Wells the World's foremost Molecular Biologist. He claims that the Paternal Blood line of Ev13 is the descendants of Hercules. So now despair in awe of Science and the Light of the Truth! 😂 Lol I like you but you are an egg head. Yes we Freemasons are descended from Nimrod and Tubalcain and now we can prove it with our DNA.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

@shadowforger2035 Tell 23 and Me about this ASAP. I'll bet they don't know half this stuff. It's important to take your meds every day.

@shadowforger2035 2 years ago

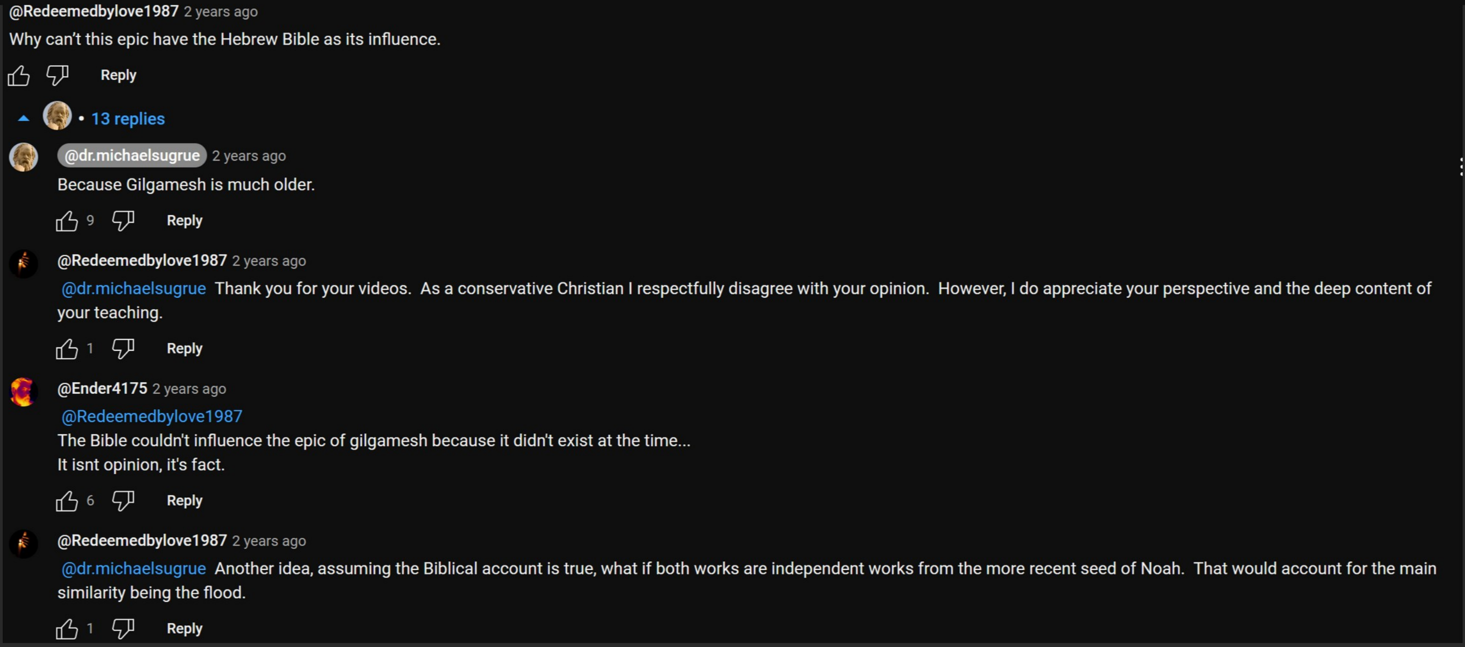
@dr.michaelsugrue yea never heard the thing about the meds before. Much like throwing a stone at a witch. Did you ever take a hard science class?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he read all of Nietzsche when he was 20, and translated most of the Gay Science when he was 23.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad went to U of C back in the day. So he said he paid his dues and will take no shit from anybody about the hard sciences.



@Redeemedbylove1987 2 years ago

Why can't this epic have the Hebrew Bible as its influence.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Because Gilgamesh is much older.

@Redeemedbylove1987 2 years ago

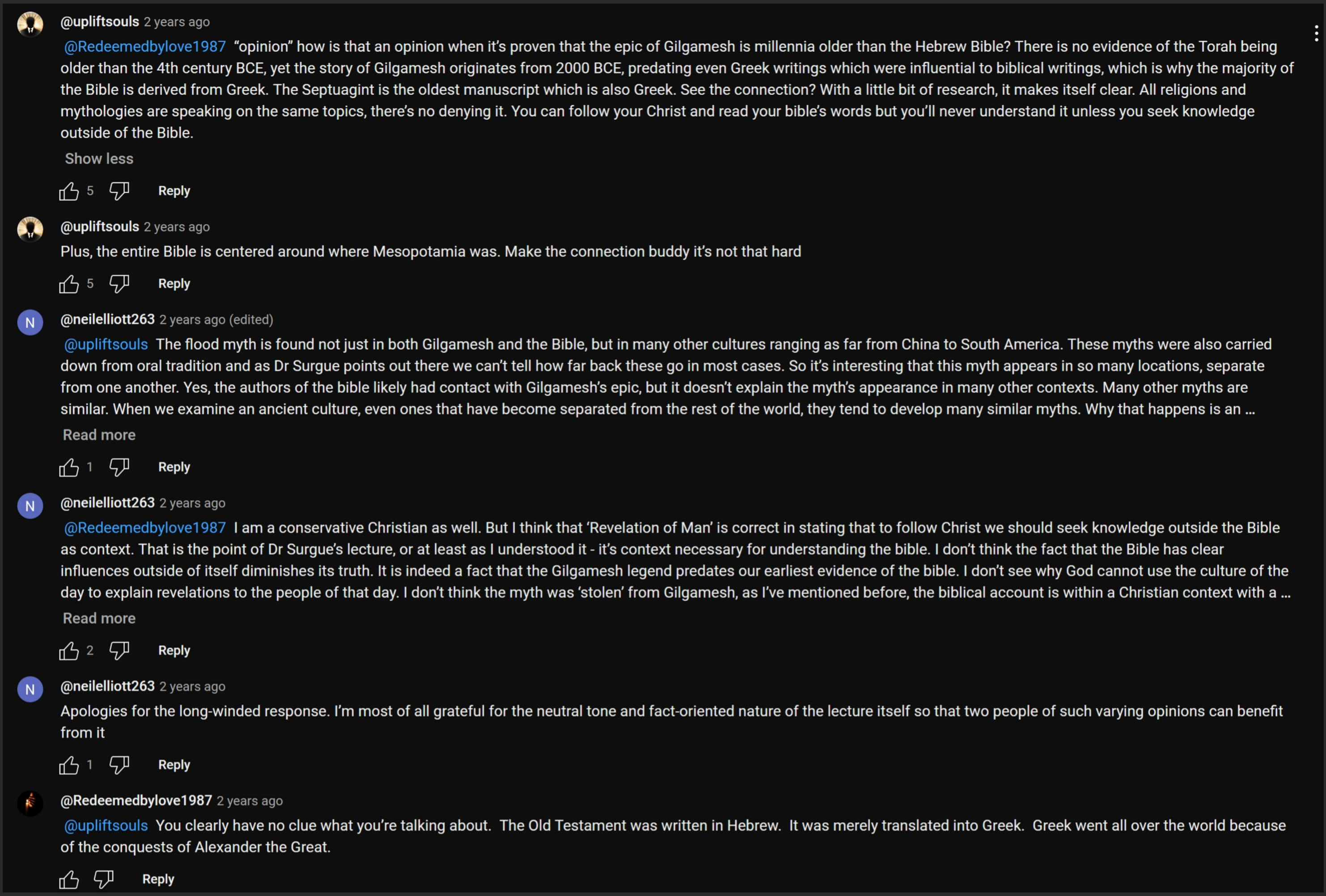
@dr.michaelsugrue Thank you for your videos. As a conservative Christian I respectfully disagree with your opinion. However, I do appreciate your perspective and the deep content of your teaching.

@Ender4175 2 years ago

@Redeemedbylove1987
The Bible couldn't influence the epic of gilgamesh because it didn't exist at the time...
It isnt opinion, it's fact.

@Redeemedbylove1987 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Another idea, assuming the Biblical account is true, what if both works are independent works from the more recent seed of Noah. That would account for the main similarity being the flood.



@upliftsouls 2 years ago

@Redeemedbylove1987 "opinion" how is that an opinion when it's proven that the epic of Gilgamesh is millennia older than the Hebrew Bible? There is no evidence of the Torah being older than the 4th century BCE, yet the story of Gilgamesh originates from 2000 BCE, predating even Greek writings which were influential to biblical writings, which is why the majority of the Bible is derived from Greek. The Septuagint is the oldest manuscript which is also Greek. See the connection? With a little bit of research, it makes itself clear. All religions and mythologies are speaking on the same topics, there's no denying it. You can follow your Christ and read your bible's words but you'll never understand it unless you seek knowledge outside of the Bible.

@upliftsouls 2 years ago

Plus, the entire Bible is centered around where Mesopotamia was. Make the connection buddy it's not that hard

@neilelliott263 2 years ago (edited)

@upliftsouls The flood myth is found not just in both Gilgamesh and the Bible, but in many other cultures ranging as far from China to South America. These myths were also carried down from oral tradition and as Dr Surgue points out there we can't tell how far back these go in most cases. So it's interesting that this myth appears in so many locations, separate from one another. Yes, the authors of the bible likely had contact with Gilgamesh's epic, but it doesn't explain the myth's appearance in many other contexts. Many other myths are similar. When we examine an ancient culture, even ones that have become separated from the rest of the world, they tend to develop many similar myths. Why that happens is an ...

@neilelliott263 2 years ago

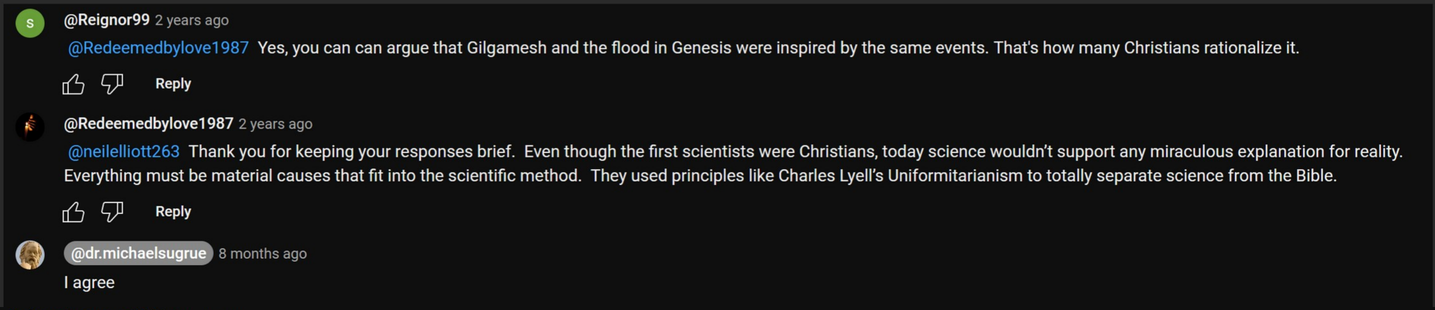
@Redeemedbylove1987 I am a conservative Christian as well. But I think that 'Revelation of Man' is correct in stating that to follow Christ we should seek knowledge outside the Bible as context. That is the point of Dr Surgue's lecture, or at least as I understood it - it's context necessary for understanding the bible. I don't think the fact that the Bible has clear influences outside of itself diminishes its truth. It is indeed a fact that the Gilgamesh legend predates our earliest evidence of the bible. I don't see why God cannot use the culture of the day to explain revelations to the people of that day. I don't think the myth was 'stolen' from Gilgamesh, as I've mentioned before, the biblical account is within a Christian context with a ...

@neilelliott263 2 years ago

Apologies for the long-winded response. I'm most of all grateful for the neutral tone and fact-oriented nature of the lecture itself so that two people of such varying opinions can benefit from it

@Redeemedbylove1987 2 years ago

@upliftsouls You clearly have no clue what you're talking about. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. It was merely translated into Greek. Greek went all over the world because of the conquests of Alexander the Great.



@Reignor99 2 years ago

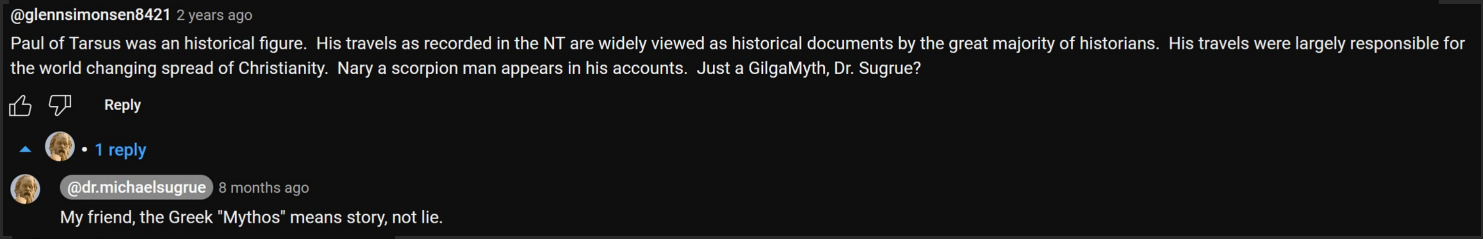
@Redeemedbylove1987 Yes, you can can argue that Gilgamesh and the flood in Genesis were inspired by the same events. That's how many Christians rationalize it.

@Redeemedbylove1987 2 years ago

@neilelliott263 Thank you for keeping your responses brief. Even though the first scientists were Christians, today science wouldn't support any miraculous explanation for reality. Everything must be material causes that fit into the scientific method. They used principles like Charles Lyell's Uniformitarianism to totally separate science from the Bible.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I agree

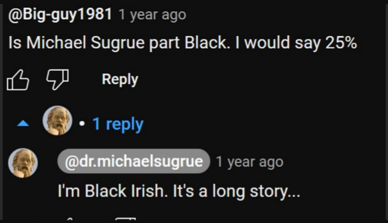


@glennsimonsen8421 2 years ago

Paul of Tarsus was an historical figure. His travels as recorded in the NT are widely viewed as historical documents by the great majority of historians. His travels were largely responsible for the world changing spread of Christianity. Nary a scorpion man appears in his accounts. Just a GilgaMyth, Dr. Sugrue?

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

My friend, the Greek "Mythos" means story, not lie.

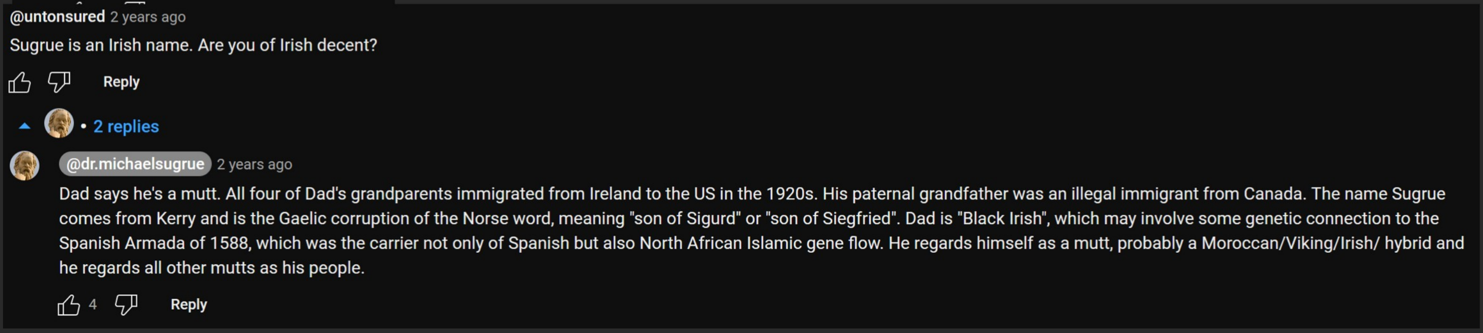


@Big-guy1981 1 year ago

Is Michael Sugrue part Black. I would say 25%

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I'm Black Irish. It's a long story...

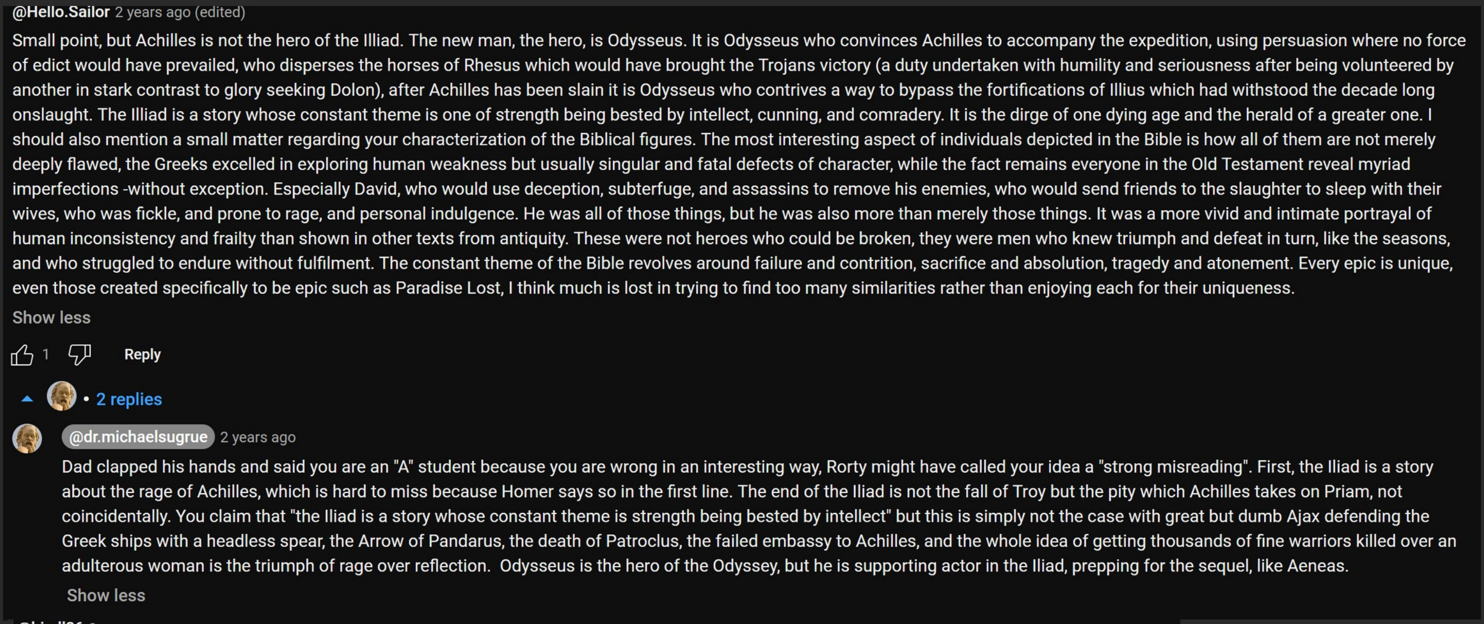


@untonsured 2 years ago

Sugrue is an Irish name. Are you of Irish decent?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says he's a mutt. All four of Dad's grandparents immigrated from Ireland to the US in the 1920s. His paternal grandfather was an illegal immigrant from Canada. The name Sugrue comes from Kerry and is the Gaelic corruption of the Norse word, meaning "son of Sigurd" or "son of Siegfried". Dad is "Black Irish", which may involve some genetic connection to the Spanish Armada of 1588, which was the carrier not only of Spanish but also North African Islamic gene flow. He regards himself as a mutt, probably a Moroccan/Viking/Irish/ hybrid and he regards all other mutts as his people.

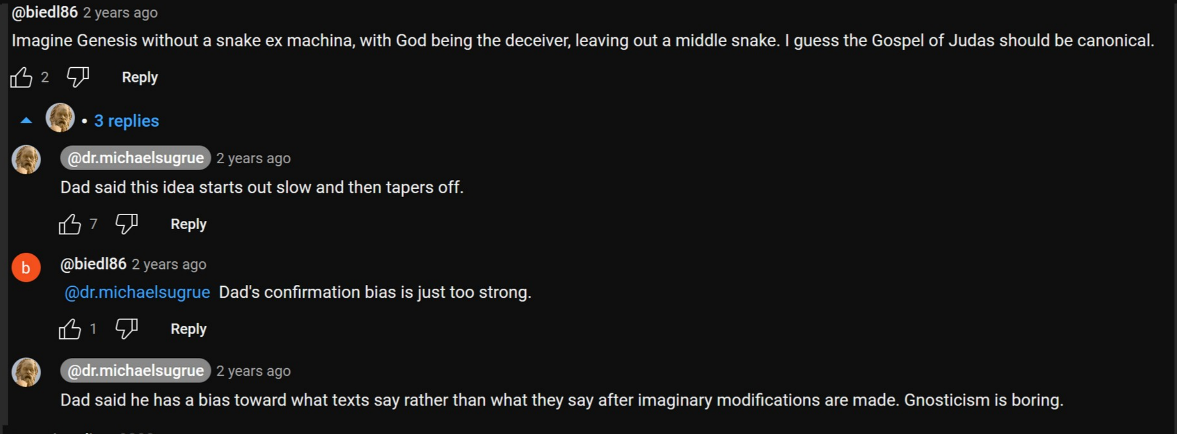


@Hello.Sailor 2 years ago (edited)

Small point, but Achilles is not the hero of the Illiad. The new man, the hero, is Odysseus. It is Odysseus who convinces Achilles to accompany the expedition, using persuasion where no force of edict would have prevailed, who disperses the horses of Rhesus which would have brought the Trojans victory (a duty undertaken with humility and seriousness after being volunteered by another in stark contrast to glory seeking Dolon), after Achilles has been slain it is Odysseus who contrives a way to bypass the fortifications of Illius which had withstood the decade long onslaught. The Illiad is a story whose constant theme is one of strength being bested by intellect, cunning, and comradery. It is the dirge of one dying age and the herald of a greater one. I should also mention a small matter regarding your characterization of the Biblical figures. The most interesting aspect of individuals depicted in the Bible is how all of them are not merely deeply flawed, the Greeks excelled in exploring human weakness but usually singular and fatal defects of character, while the fact remains everyone in the Old Testament reveal myriad imperfections -without exception. Especially David, who would use deception, subterfuge, and assassins to remove his enemies, who would send friends to the slaughter to sleep with their wives, who was fickle, and prone to rage, and personal indulgence. He was all of those things, but he was also more than merely those things. It was a more vivid and intimate portrayal of human inconsistency and frailty than shown in other texts from antiquity. These were not heroes who could be broken, they were men who knew triumph and defeat in turn, like the seasons, and who struggled to endure without fulfilment. The constant theme of the Bible revolves around failure and contrition, sacrifice and absolution, tragedy and atonement. Every epic is unique, even those created specifically to be epic such as Paradise Lost, I think much is lost in trying to find too many similarities rather than enjoying each for their uniqueness.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad clapped his hands and said you are an "A" student because you are wrong in an interesting way, Rorty might have called your idea a "strong misreading". First, the Iliad is a story about the rage of Achilles, which is hard to miss because Homer says so in the first line. The end of the Iliad is not the fall of Troy but the pity which Achilles takes on Priam, not coincidentally. You claim that "the Iliad is a story whose constant theme is strength being bested by intellect" but this is simply not the case with great but dumb Ajax defending the Greek ships with a headless spear, the Arrow of Pandarus, the death of Patroclus, the failed embassy to Achilles, and the whole idea of getting thousands of fine warriors killed over an adulterous woman is the triumph of rage over reflection. Odysseus is the hero of the Odyssey, but he is supporting actor in the Iliad, prepping for the sequel, like Aeneas.



@biedl86 2 years ago

Imagine Genesis without a snake ex machina, with God being the deceiver, leaving out a middle snake. I guess the Gospel of Judas should be canonical.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

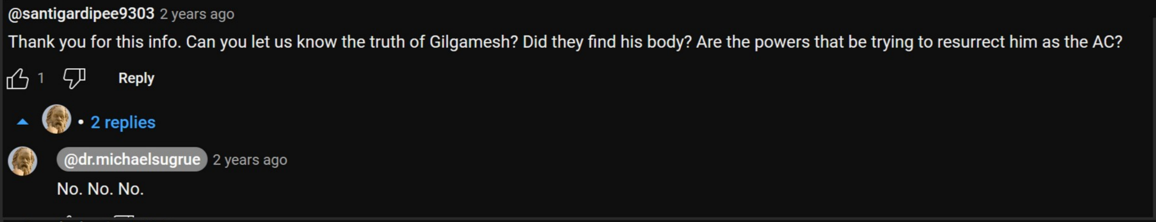
Dad said this idea starts out slow and then tapers off.

@biedl86 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Dad's confirmation bias is just too strong.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he has a bias toward what texts say rather than what they say after imaginary modifications are made. Gnosticism is boring.

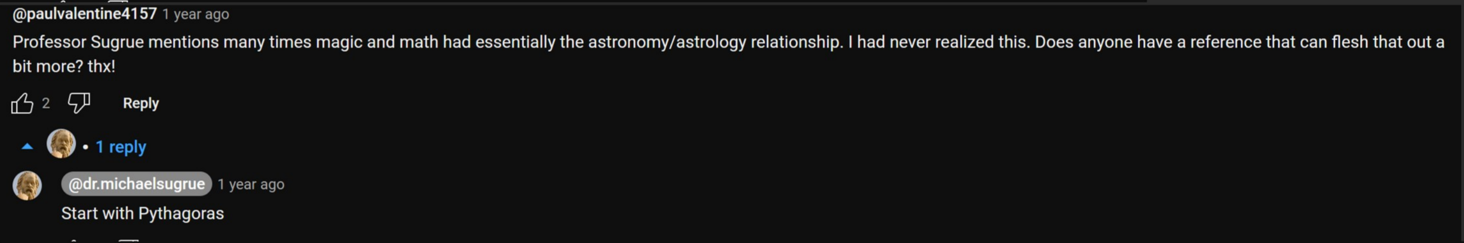


@santigardipee9303 2 years ago

Thank you for this info. Can you let us know the truth of Gilgamesh? Did they find his body? Are the powers that be trying to resurrect him as the AC?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

No. No. No.

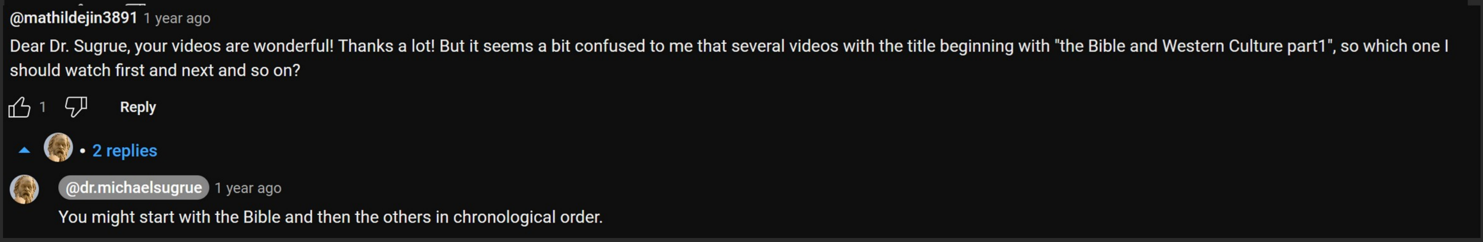


@paulvalentine4157 1 year ago

Professor Sugrue mentions many times magic and math had essentially the astronomy/astrology relationship. I had never realized this. Does anyone have a reference that can flesh that out a bit more? thx!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Start with Pythagoras

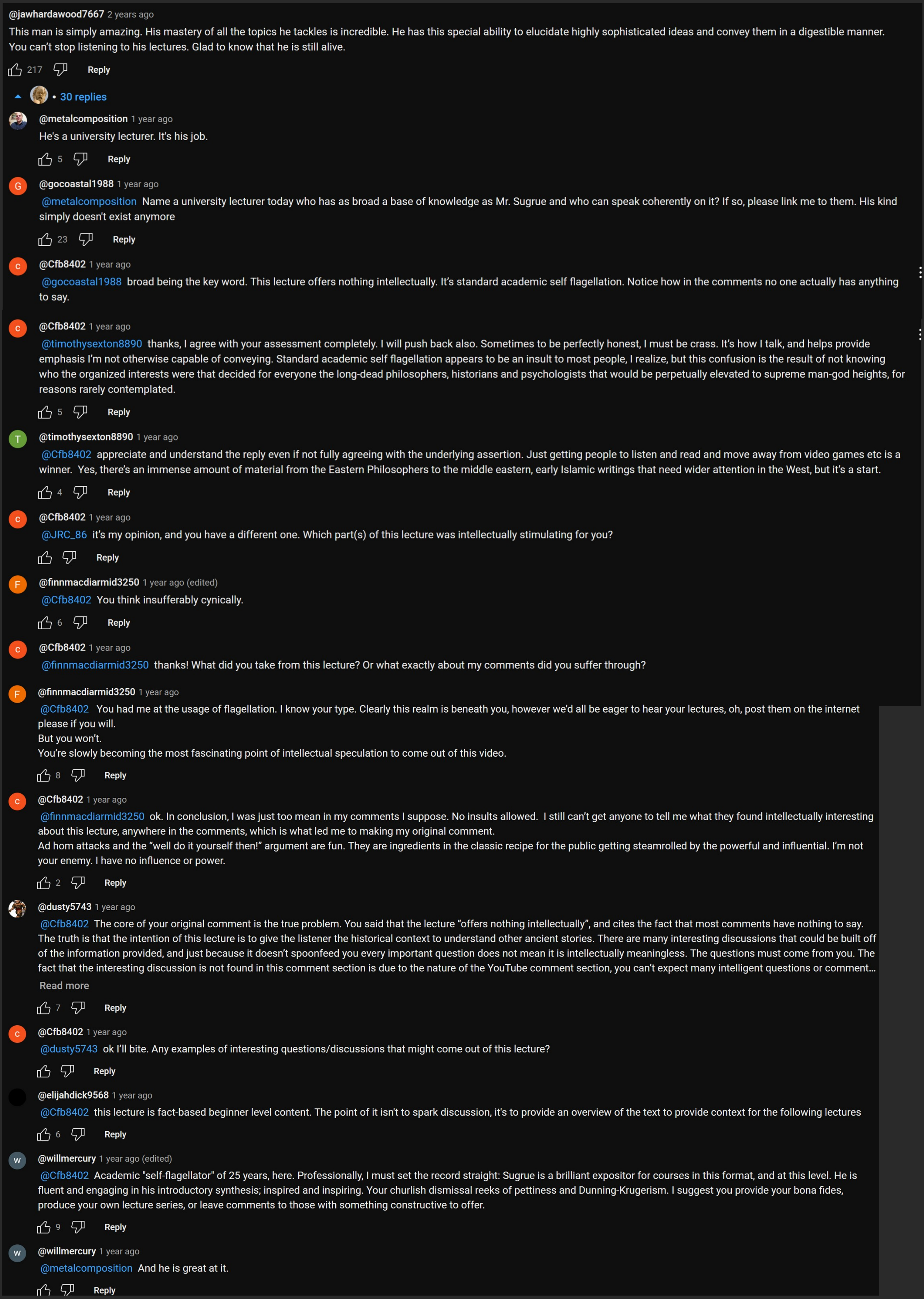


@mathildejin3891 1 year ago

Dear Dr. Sugrue, your videos are wonderful! Thanks a lot! But it seems a bit confused to me that several videos with the title beginning with "the Bible and Western Culture part1", so which one I should watch first and next and so on?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You might start with the Bible and then the others in chronological order.



@jawhardawood7667 2 years ago

This man is simply amazing. His mastery of all the topics he tackles is incredible. He has this special ability to elucidate highly sophisticated ideas and convey them in a digestible manner. You can't stop listening to his lectures. Glad to know that he is still alive.

217 Reply

• 30 replies

@metalcomposition 1 year ago

He's a university lecturer. It's his job.

5 Reply

@gocoastal1988 1 year ago

@metalcomposition Name a university lecturer today who has as broad a base of knowledge as Mr. Sugrue and who can speak coherently on it? If so, please link me to them. His kind simply doesn't exist anymore

23 Reply

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@gocoastal1988 broad being the key word. This lecture offers nothing intellectually. It's standard academic self flagellation. Notice how in the comments no one actually has anything to say.

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@timothysexton8890 thanks, I agree with your assessment completely. I will push back also. Sometimes to be perfectly honest, I must be crass. It's how I talk, and helps provide emphasis I'm not otherwise capable of conveying. Standard academic self flagellation appears to be an insult to most people, I realize, but this confusion is the result of not knowing who the organized interests were that decided for everyone the long-dead philosophers, historians and psychologists that would be perpetually elevated to supreme man-god heights, for reasons rarely contemplated.

5 Reply

@timothysexton8890 1 year ago

@Cfb8402 appreciate and understand the reply even if not fully agreeing with the underlying assertion. Just getting people to listen and read and move away from video games etc is a winner. Yes, there's an immense amount of material from the Eastern Philosophers to the middle eastern, early Islamic writings that need wider attention in the West, but it's a start.

4 Reply

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@JRC_86 it's my opinion, and you have a different one. Which part(s) of this lecture was intellectually stimulating for you?

Reply

@finnmacdiarmid3250 1 year ago (edited)

@Cfb8402 You think insufferably cynically.

6 Reply

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@finnmacdiarmid3250 thanks! What did you take from this lecture? Or what exactly about my comments did you suffer through?

@finnmacdiarmid3250 1 year ago

@Cfb8402 You had me at the usage of flagellation. I know your type. Clearly this realm is beneath you, however we'd all be eager to hear your lectures, oh, post them on the internet please if you will.
But you won't.
You're slowly becoming the most fascinating point of intellectual speculation to come out of this video.

8 Reply

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@finnmacdiarmid3250 ok. In conclusion, I was just too mean in my comments I suppose. No insults allowed. I still can't get anyone to tell me what they found intellectually interesting about this lecture, anywhere in the comments, which is what led me to making my original comment.
Ad hom attacks and the "well do it yourself then!" argument are fun. They are ingredients in the classic recipe for the public getting steamrolled by the powerful and influential. I'm not your enemy. I have no influence or power.

2 Reply

@dusty5743 1 year ago

@Cfb8402 The core of your original comment is the true problem. You said that the lecture "offers nothing intellectually", and cites the fact that most comments have nothing to say. The truth is that the intention of this lecture is to give the listener the historical context to understand other ancient stories. There are many interesting discussions that could be built off of the information provided, and just because it doesn't spoonfeed you every important question does not mean it is intellectually meaningless. The questions must come from you. The fact that the interesting discussion is not found in this comment section is due to the nature of the YouTube comment section, you can't expect many intelligent questions or comment...

Read more

7 Reply

@Cfb8402 1 year ago

@dusty5743 ok I'll bite. Any examples of interesting questions/discussions that might come out of this lecture?

Reply

@elijahdick9568 1 year ago

@Cfb8402 this lecture is fact-based beginner level content. The point of it isn't to spark discussion, it's to provide an overview of the text to provide context for the following lectures

6 Reply

@willmercury 1 year ago (edited)

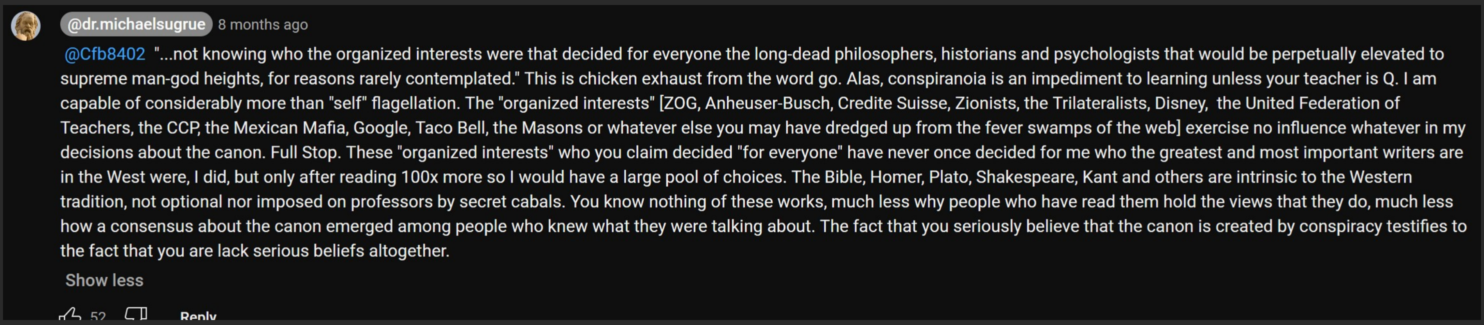
@Cfb8402 Academic "self-flagellator" of 25 years, here. Professionally, I must set the record straight: Sugrue is a brilliant expositor for courses in this format, and at this level. He is fluent and engaging in his introductory synthesis; inspired and inspiring. Your churlish dismissal reeks of pettiness and Dunning-Krugerism. I suggest you provide your bona fides, produce your own lecture series, or leave comments to those with something constructive to offer.

9 Reply

@willmercury 1 year ago

@metalcomposition And he is great at it.

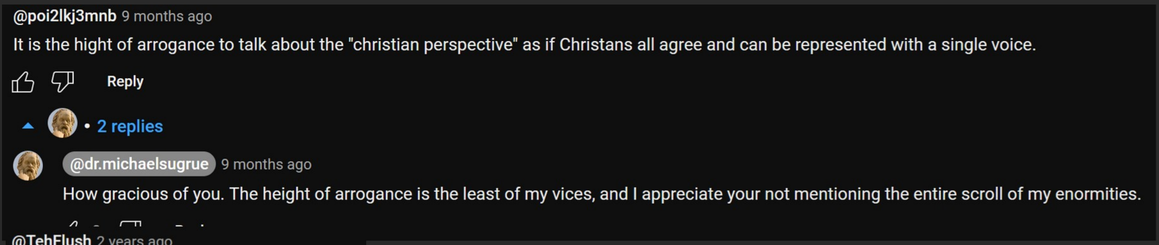
Reply



@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

@Cfb8402 "...not knowing who the organized interests were that decided for everyone the long-dead philosophers, historians and psychologists that would be perpetually elevated to supreme man-god heights, for reasons rarely contemplated." This is chicken exhaust from the word go. Alas, conspiranoia is an impediment to learning unless your teacher is Q. I am capable of considerably more than "self" flagellation. The "organized interests" [ZOG, Anheuser-Busch, Credite Suisse, Zionists, the Trilateralists, Disney, the United Federation of Teachers, the CCP, the Mexican Mafia, Google, Taco Bell, the Masons or whatever else you may have dredged up from the fever swamps of the web] exercise no influence whatever in my decisions about the canon. Full Stop. These "organized interests" who you claim decided "for everyone" have never once decided for me who the greatest and most important writers are in the West were, I did, but only after reading 100x more so I would have a large pool of choices. The Bible, Homer, Plato, Shakespeare, Kant and others are intrinsic to the Western tradition, not optional nor imposed on professors by secret cabals. You know nothing of these works, much less why people who have read them hold the views that they do, much less how a consensus about the canon emerged among people who knew what they were talking about. The fact that you seriously believe that the canon is created by conspiracy testifies to the fact that you are lack serious beliefs altogether.

Shakespeare: Measure for Measure

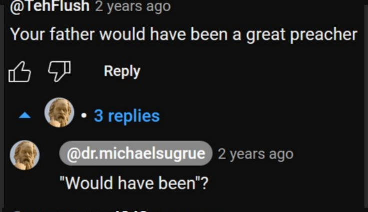


@poi2lkj3mnb 9 months ago

It is the hight of arrogance to talk about the "christian perspective" as if Christans all agree and can be represented with a single voice.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

How gracious of you. The height of arrogance is the least of my vices, and I appreciate your not mentioning the entire scroll of my enormities.

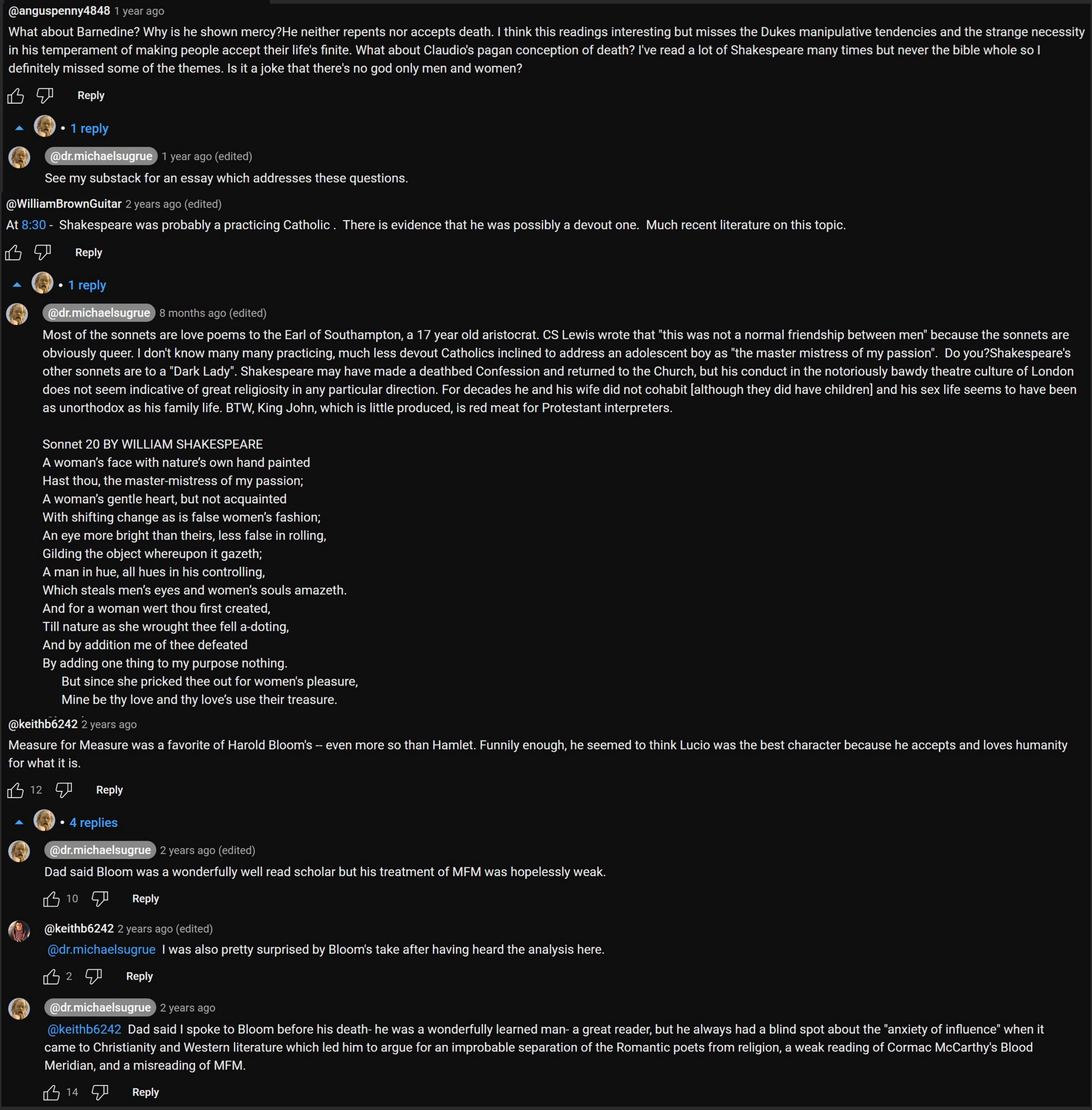


@TehFlush 2 years ago

Your father would have been a great preacher

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

"Would have been"?



@anguspenny4848 1 year ago

What about Barnedine? Why is he shown mercy?He neither repents nor accepts death. I think this readings interesting but misses the Dukes manipulative tendencies and the strange necessity in his temperament of making people accept their life's finite. What about Claudio's pagan conception of death? I've read a lot of Shakespeare many times but never the bible whole so I definitely missed some of the themes. Is it a joke that there's no god only men and women?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

See my substack for an essay which addresses these questions.

@WilliamBrownGuitar 2 years ago (edited)

At 8:30 - Shakespeare was probably a practicing Catholic . There is evidence that he was possibly a devout one. Much recent literature on this topic.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago (edited)

Most of the sonnets are love poems to the Earl of Southampton, a 17 year old aristocrat. CS Lewis wrote that "this was not a normal friendship between men" because the sonnets are obviously queer. I don't know many many practicing, much less devout Catholics inclined to address an adolescent boy as "the master mistress of my passion". Do you?Shakespeare's other sonnets are to a "Dark Lady". Shakespeare may have made a deathbed Confession and returned to the Church, but his conduct in the notoriously bawdy theatre culture of London does not seem indicative of great religiosity in any particular direction. For decades he and his wife did not cohabit [although they did have children] and his sex life seems to have been as unorthodox as his family life. BTW, King John, which is little produced, is red meat for Protestant interpreters.

Sonnet 20 BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
A woman's face with nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created,
Till nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting,
And by addition me of thee defeated
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
    But since she pricked thee out for women's pleasure,
    Mine be thy love and thy love's use their treasure.

@keithb6242 2 years ago

Measure for Measure was a favorite of Harold Bloom's -- even more so than Hamlet. Funnily enough, he seemed to think Lucio was the best character because he accepts and loves humanity for what it is.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

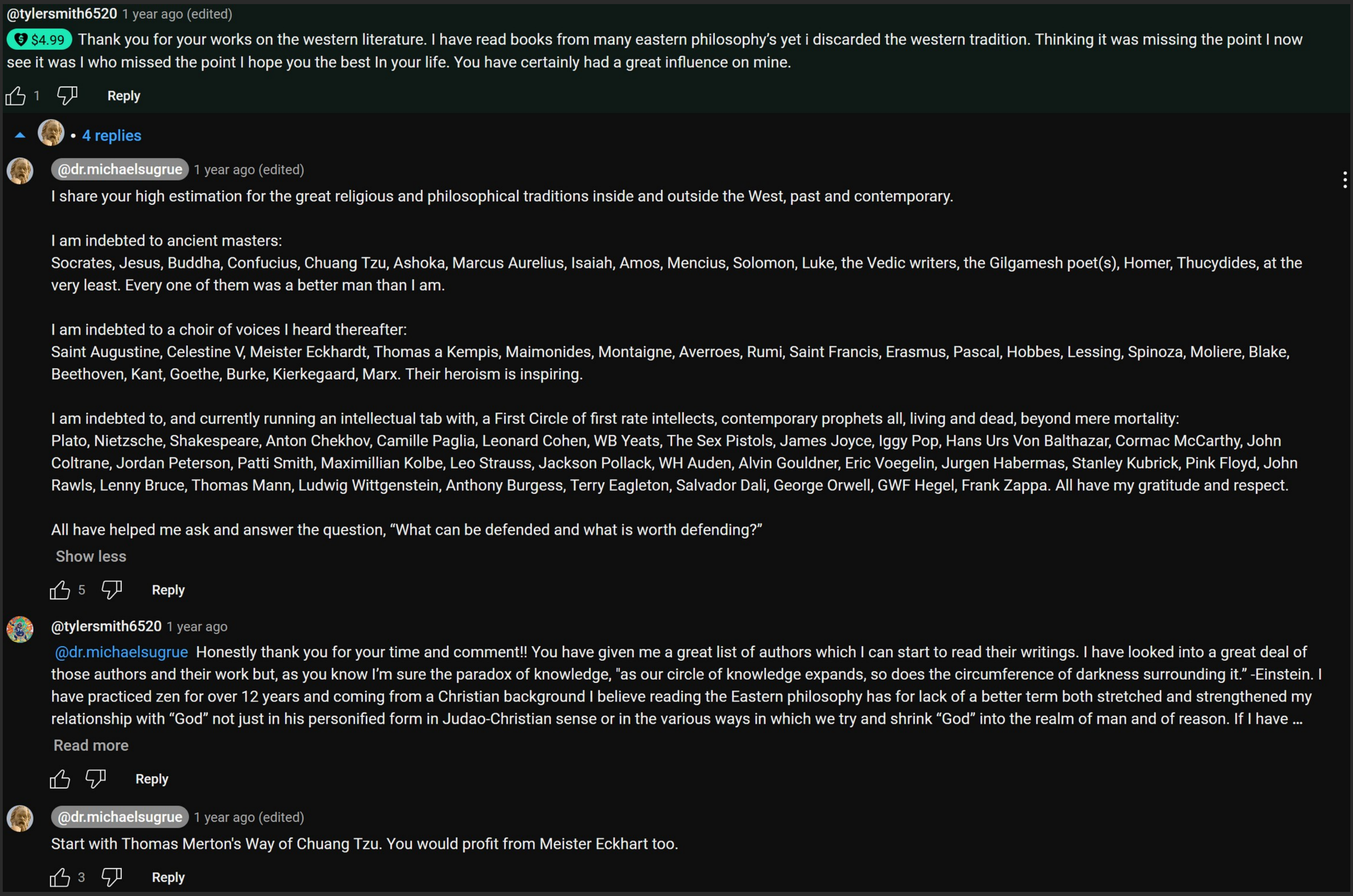
Dad said Bloom was a wonderfully well read scholar but his treatment of MFM was hopelessly weak.

@keithb6242 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue I was also pretty surprised by Bloom's take after having heard the analysis here.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@keithb6242 Dad said I spoke to Bloom before his death- he was a wonderfully learned man- a great reader, but he always had a blind spot about the "anxiety of influence" when it came to Christianity and Western literature which led him to argue for an improbable separation of the Romantic poets from religion, a weak reading of Cormac McCarthy's Blood Meridian, and a misreading of MFM.



@tylersmith6520 1 year ago (edited)

$4.99 Thank you for your works on the western literature. I have read books from many eastern philosophy's yet i discarded the western tradition. Thinking it was missing the point I now see it was I who missed the point I hope you the best In your life. You have certainly had a great influence on mine.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I share your high estimation for the great religious and philosophical traditions inside and outside the West, past and contemporary.

I am indebted to ancient masters:
Socrates, Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, Chuang Tzu, Ashoka, Marcus Aurelius, Isaiah, Amos, Mencius, Solomon, Luke, the Vedic writers, the Gilgamesh poet(s), Homer, Thucydides, at the very least. Every one of them was a better man than I am.

I am indebted to a choir of voices I heard thereafter:
Saint Augustine, Celestine V, Meister Eckhardt, Thomas a Kempis, Maimonides, Montaigne, Averroes, Rumi, Saint Francis, Erasmus, Pascal, Hobbes, Lessing, Spinoza, Moliere, Blake, Beethoven, Kant, Goethe, Burke, Kierkegaard, Marx. Their heroism is inspiring.

I am indebted to, and currently running an intellectual tab with, a First Circle of first rate intellects, contemporary prophets all, living and dead, beyond mere mortality:
Plato, Nietzsche, Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov, Camille Paglia, Leonard Cohen, WB Yeats, The Sex Pistols, James Joyce, Iggy Pop, Hans Urs Von Balthazar, Cormac McCarthy, John Coltrane, Jordan Peterson, Patti Smith, Maximillian Kolbe, Leo Strauss, Jackson Pollack, WH Auden, Alvin Gouldner, Eric Voegelin, Jurgen Habermas, Stanley Kubrick, Pink Floyd, John Rawls, Lenny Bruce, Thomas Mann, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Anthony Burgess, Terry Eagleton, Salvador Dali, George Orwell, GWF Hegel, Frank Zappa. All have my gratitude and respect.

All have helped me ask and answer the question, “What can be defended and what is worth defending?”

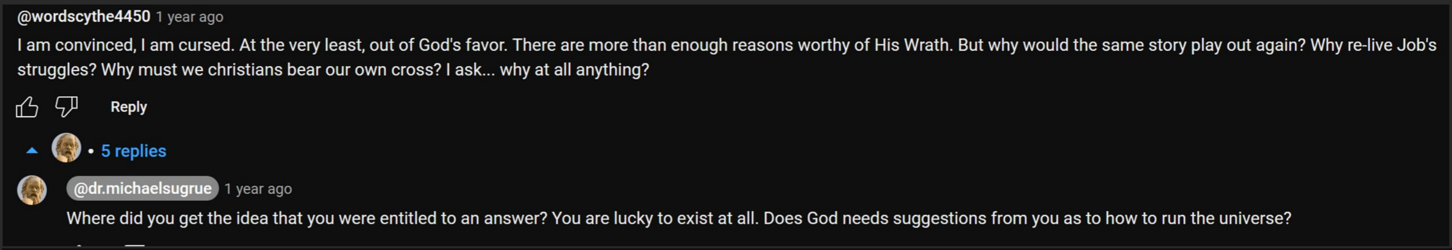
@tylersmith6520 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Honestly thank you for your time and comment!! You have given me a great list of authors which I can start to read their writings. I have looked into a great deal of those authors and their work but, as you know I'm sure the paradox of knowledge, "as our circle of knowledge expands, so does the circumference of darkness surrounding it.” -Einstein. I have practiced zen for over 12 years and coming from a Christian background I believe reading the Eastern philosophy has for lack of a better term both stretched and strengthened my relationship with “God” not just in his personified form in Judao-Christian sense or in the various ways in which we try and shrink “God” into the realm of man and of reason. If I have ...

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Start with Thomas Merton's Way of Chuang Tzu. You would profit from Meister Eckhart too.

Job and the Problem of Evil

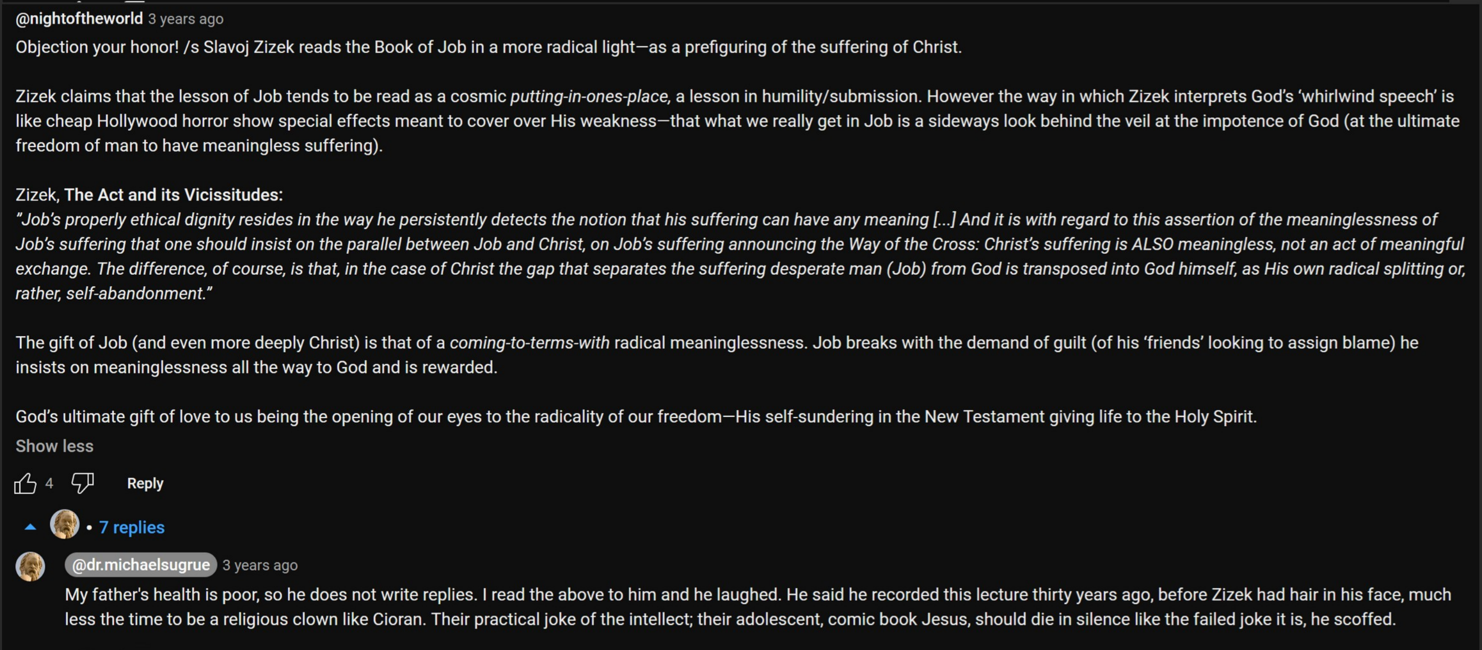


@wordscythe4450 1 year ago

I am convinced, I am cursed. At the very least, out of God's favor. There are more than enough reasons worthy of His Wrath. But why would the same story play out again? Why re-live Job's struggles? Why must we christians bear our own cross? I ask... why at all anything?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Where did you get the idea that you were entitled to an answer? You are lucky to exist at all. Does God needs suggestions from you as to how to run the universe?



@nightoftheworld 3 years ago

Objection your honor! /s Slavoj Zizek reads the Book of Job in a more radical light—as a prefiguring of the suffering of Christ.

Zizek claims that the lesson of Job tends to be read as a cosmic *putting-in-ones-place*, a lesson in humility/submission. However the way in which Zizek interprets God's 'whirlwind speech' is like cheap Hollywood horror show special effects meant to cover over His weakness—that what we really get in Job is a sideways look behind the veil at the impotence of God (at the ultimate freedom of man to have meaningless suffering).

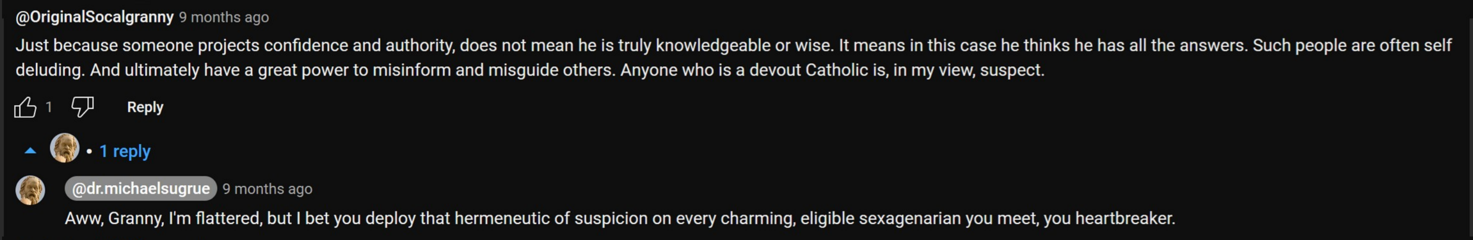
Zizek, **The Act and its Vicissitudes:**
"Job's properly ethical dignity resides in the way he persistently detects the notion that his suffering can have any meaning [...] And it is with regard to this assertion of the meaninglessness of Job's suffering that one should insist on the parallel between Job and Christ, on Job's suffering announcing the Way of the Cross: Christ's suffering is ALSO meaningless, not an act of meaningful exchange. The difference, of course, is that, in the case of Christ the gap that separates the suffering desperate man (Job) from God is transposed into God himself, as His own radical splitting or, rather, self-abandonment."

The gift of Job (and even more deeply Christ) is that of a *coming-to-terms-with* radical meaninglessness. Job breaks with the demand of guilt (of his 'friends' looking to assign blame) he insists on meaninglessness all the way to God and is rewarded.

God's ultimate gift of love to us being the opening of our eyes to the radicality of our freedom—His self-sundering in the New Testament giving life to the Holy Spirit.

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

My father's health is poor, so he does not write replies. I read the above to him and he laughed. He said he recorded this lecture thirty years ago, before Zizek had hair in his face, much less the time to be a religious clown like Cioran. Their practical joke of the intellect; their adolescent, comic book Jesus, should die in silence like the failed joke it is, he scoffed.

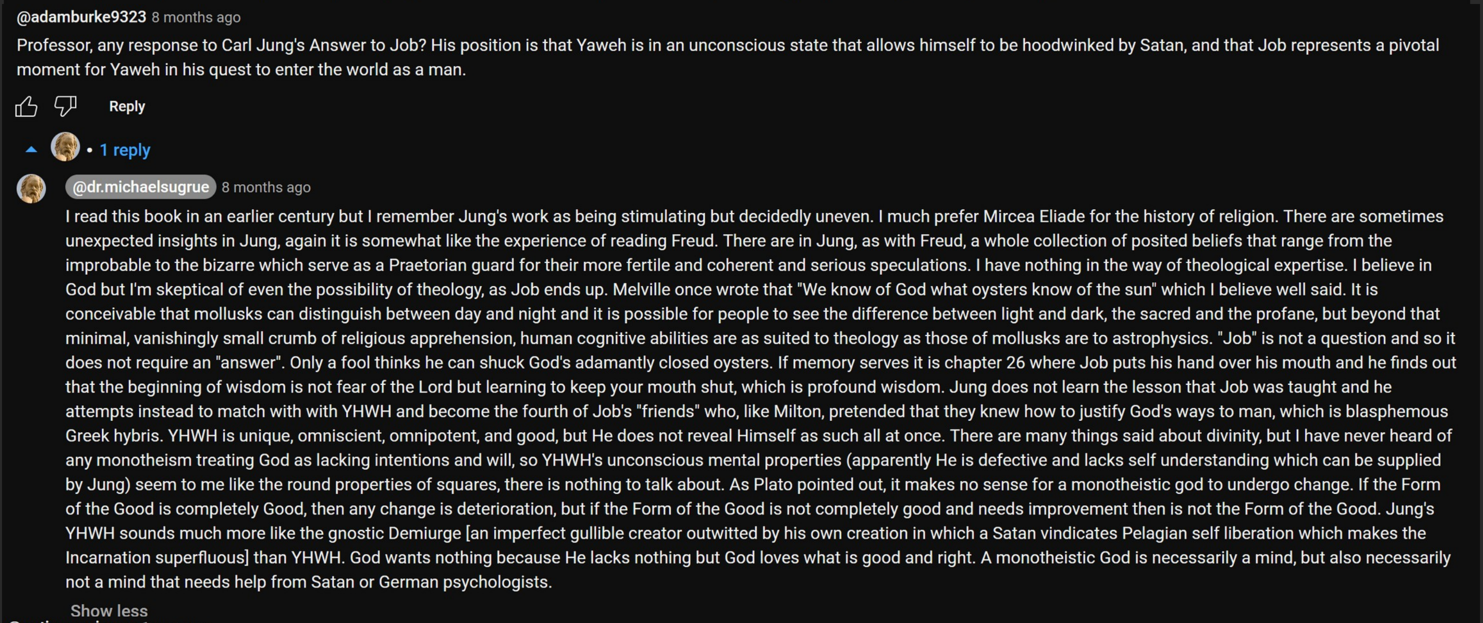


@OriginalSocalgranny 9 months ago

Just because someone projects confidence and authority, does not mean he is truly knowledgeable or wise. It means in this case he thinks he has all the answers. Such people are often self deluding. And ultimately have a great power to misinform and misguide others. Anyone who is a devout Catholic is, in my view, suspect.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Aww, Granny, I'm flattered, but I bet you deploy that hermeneutic of suspicion on every charming, eligible sexagenarian you meet, you heartbreaker.

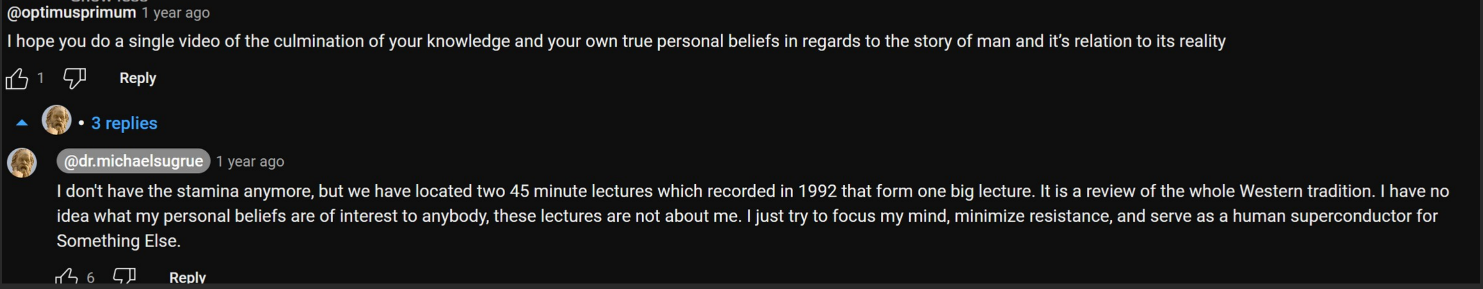


@adamburke9323 8 months ago

Professor, any response to Carl Jung's Answer to Job? His position is that Yaweh is in an unconscious state that allows himself to be hoodwinked by Satan, and that Job represents a pivotal moment for Yaweh in his quest to enter the world as a man.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I read this book in an earlier century but I remember Jung's work as being stimulating but decidedly uneven. I much prefer Mircea Eliade for the history of religion. There are sometimes unexpected insights in Jung, again it is somewhat like the experience of reading Freud. There are in Jung, as with Freud, a whole collection of posited beliefs that range from the improbable to the bizarre which serve as a Praetorian guard for their more fertile and coherent and serious speculations. I have nothing in the way of theological expertise. I believe in God but I'm skeptical of even the possibility of theology, as Job ends up. Melville once wrote that "We know of God what oysters know of the sun" which I believe well said. It is conceivable that mollusks can distinguish between day and night and it is possible for people to see the difference between light and dark, the sacred and the profane, but beyond that minimal, vanishingly small crumb of religious apprehension, human cognitive abilities are as suited to theology as those of mollusks are to astrophysics. "Job" is not a question and so it does not require an "answer". Only a fool thinks he can shuck God's adamantly closed oysters. If memory serves it is chapter 26 where Job puts his hand over his mouth and he finds out that the beginning of wisdom is not fear of the Lord but learning to keep your mouth shut, which is profound wisdom. Jung does not learn the lesson that Job was taught and he attempts instead to match with with YHWH and become the fourth of Job's "friends" who, like Milton, pretended that they knew how to justify God's ways to man, which is blasphemous Greek hybris. YHWH is unique, omniscient, omnipotent, and good, but He does not reveal Himself as such all at once. There are many things said about divinity, but I have never heard of any monotheism treating God as lacking intentions and will, so YHWH's unconscious mental properties (apparently He is defective and lacks self understanding which can be supplied by Jung) seem to me like the round properties of squares, there is nothing to talk about. As Plato pointed out, it makes no sense for a monotheistic god to undergo change. If the Form of the Good is completely Good, then any change is deterioration, but if the Form of the Good is not completely good and needs improvement then is not the Form of the Good. Jung's YHWH sounds much more like the gnostic Demiurge [an imperfect gullible creator outwitted by his own creation in which a Satan vindicates Pelagian self liberation which makes the Incarnation superfluous] than YHWH. God wants nothing because He lacks nothing but God loves what is good and right. A monotheistic God is necessarily a mind, but also necessarily not a mind that needs help from Satan or German psychologists.

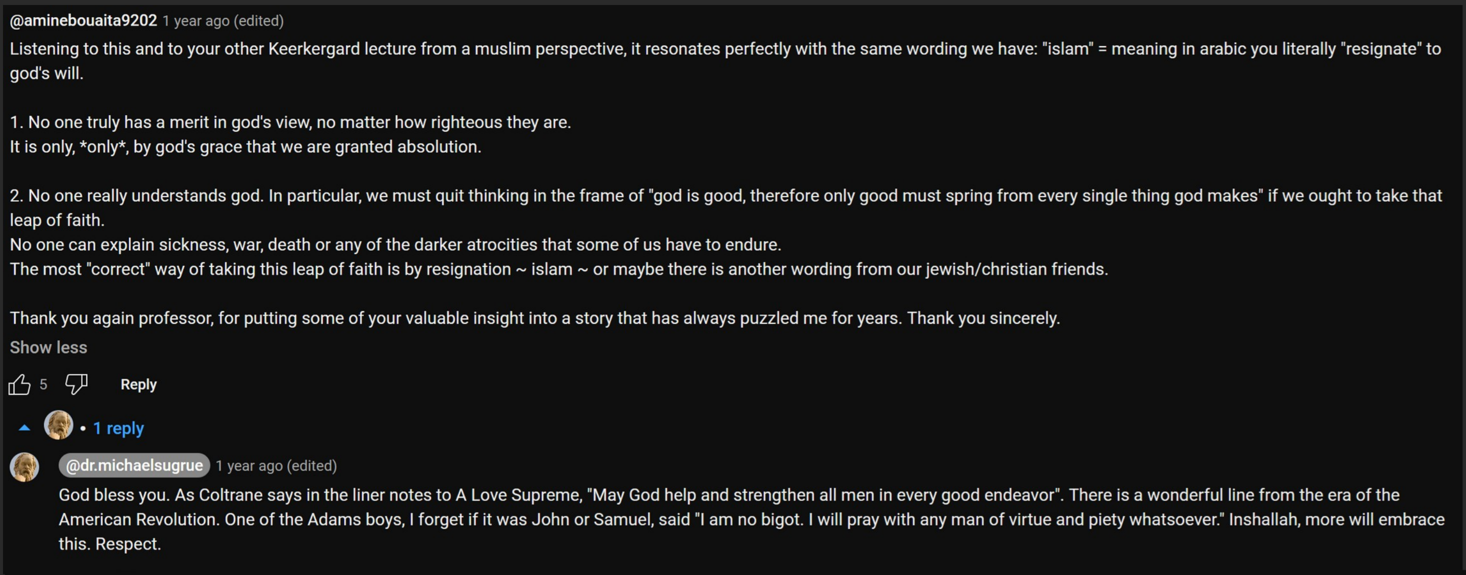


@optimusprimum 1 year ago

I hope you do a single video of the culmination of your knowledge and your own true personal beliefs in regards to the story of man and it's relation to its reality

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't have the stamina anymore, but we have located two 45 minute lectures which recorded in 1992 that form one big lecture. It is a review of the whole Western tradition. I have no idea what my personal beliefs are of interest to anybody, these lectures are not about me. I just try to focus my mind, minimize resistance, and serve as a human superconductor for Something Else.



@aminebouaita9202 1 year ago (edited)

Listening to this and to your other Keerkergard lecture from a muslim perspective, it resonates perfectly with the same wording we have: "islam" = meaning in arabic you literally "resignate" to god's will.

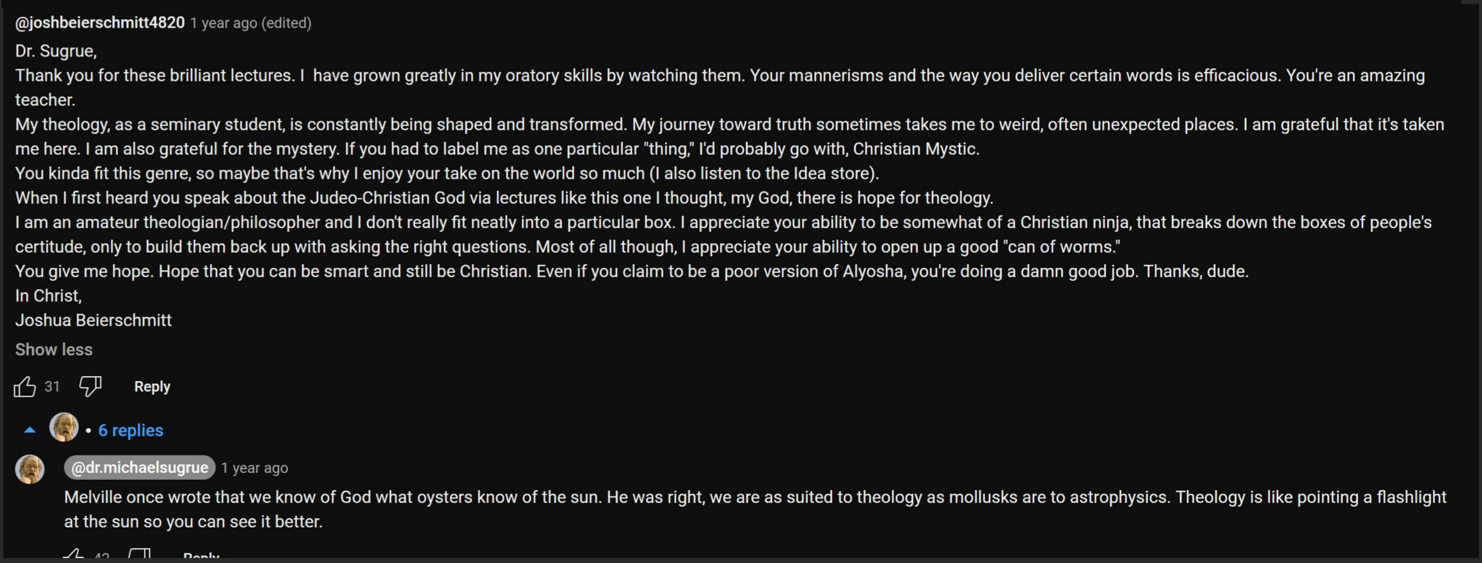
1. No one truly has a merit in god's view, no matter how righteous they are.
It is only, *only*, by god's grace that we are granted absolution.

2. No one really understands god. In particular, we must quit thinking in the frame of "god is good, therefore only good must spring from every single thing god makes" if we ought to take that leap of faith.
No one can explain sickness, war, death or any of the darker atrocities that some of us have to endure.
The most "correct" way of taking this leap of faith is by resignation ~ islam ~ or maybe there is another wording from our jewish/christian friends.

Thank you again professor, for putting some of your valuable insight into a story that has always puzzled me for years. Thank you sincerely.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

God bless you. As Coltrane says in the liner notes to A Love Supreme, "May God help and strengthen all men in every good endeavor". There is a wonderful line from the era of the American Revolution. One of the Adams boys, I forget if it was John or Samuel, said "I am no bigot. I will pray with any man of virtue and piety whatsoever." Inshallah, more will embrace this. Respect.



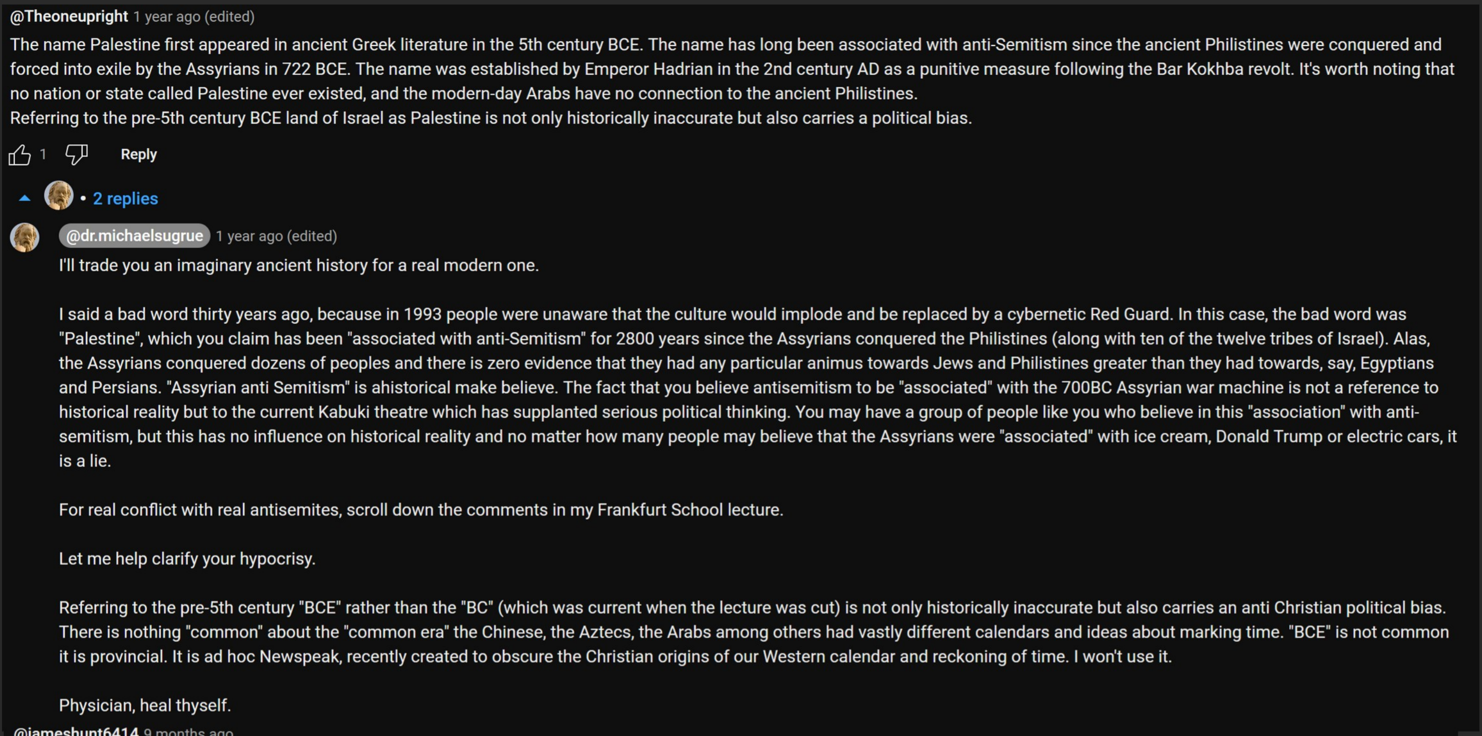
@joshbeierschmitt4820 1 year ago (edited)

Dr. Sugrue,
Thank you for these brilliant lectures. I have grown greatly in my oratory skills by watching them. Your mannerisms and the way you deliver certain words is efficacious. You're an amazing teacher.
My theology, as a seminary student, is constantly being shaped and transformed. My journey toward truth sometimes takes me to weird, often unexpected places. I am grateful that it's taken me here. I am also grateful for the mystery. If you had to label me as one particular "thing," I'd probably go with, Christian Mystic.
You kinda fit this genre, so maybe that's why I enjoy your take on the world so much (I also listen to the Idea store).
When I first heard you speak about the Judeo-Christian God via lectures like this one I thought, my God, there is hope for theology.
I am an amateur theologian/philosopher and I don't really fit neatly into a particular box. I appreciate your ability to be somewhat of a Christian ninja, that breaks down the boxes of people's certitude, only to build them back up with asking the right questions. Most of all though, I appreciate your ability to open up a good "can of worms."
You give me hope. Hope that you can be smart and still be Christian. Even if you claim to be a poor version of Alyosha, you're doing a damn good job. Thanks, dude.
In Christ,
Joshua Beierschmitt

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Melville once wrote that we know of God what oysters know of the sun. He was right, we are as suited to theology as mollusks are to astrophysics. Theology is like pointing a flashlight at the sun so you can see it better.

Isaiah: Turning Swords into Plowshares



@Theoneupright 1 year ago (edited)

The name Palestine first appeared in ancient Greek literature in the 5th century BCE. The name has long been associated with anti-Semitism since the ancient Philistines were conquered and forced into exile by the Assyrians in 722 BCE. The name was established by Emperor Hadrian in the 2nd century AD as a punitive measure following the Bar Kokhba revolt. It's worth noting that no nation or state called Palestine ever existed, and the modern-day Arabs have no connection to the ancient Philistines.
Referring to the pre-5th century BCE land of Israel as Palestine is not only historically inaccurate but also carries a political bias.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I'll trade you an imaginary ancient history for a real modern one.

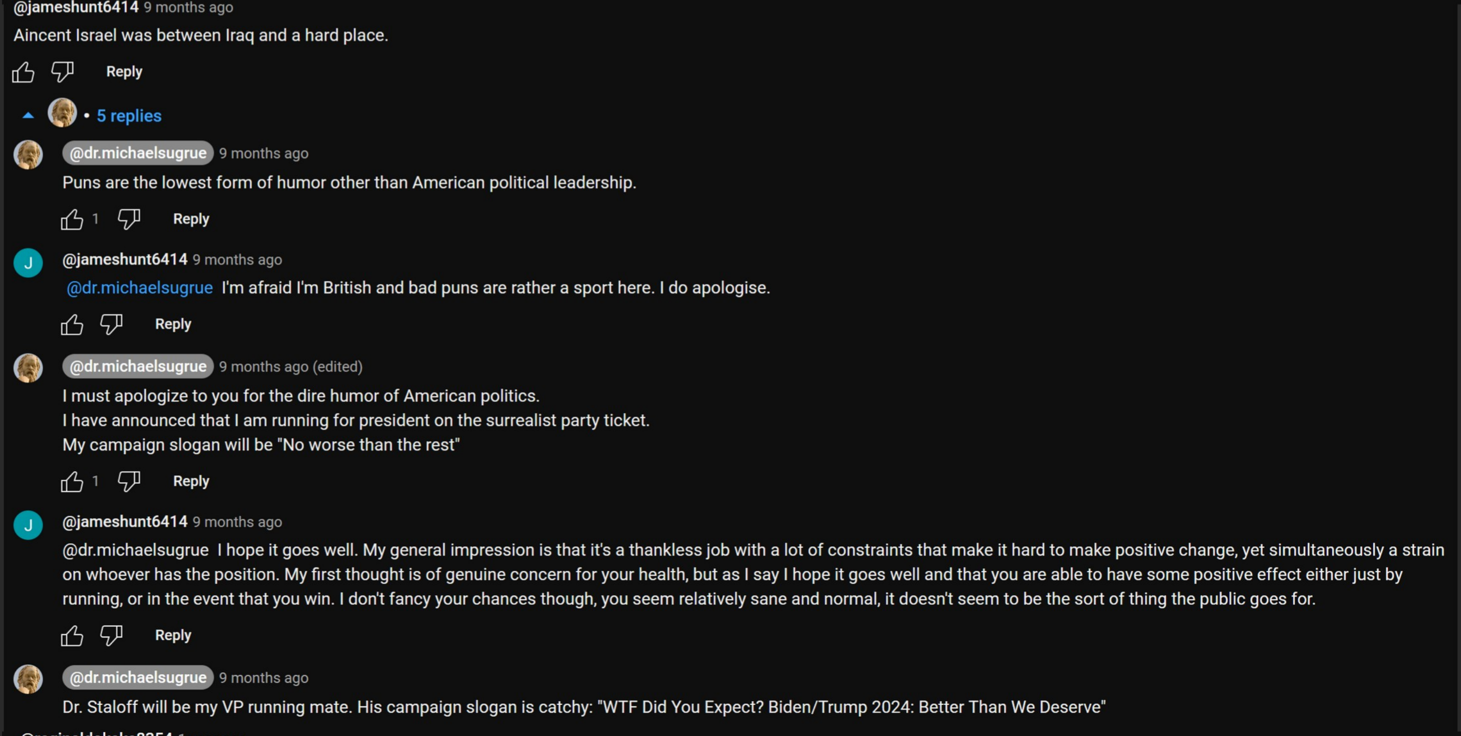
I said a bad word thirty years ago, because in 1993 people were unaware that the culture would implode and be replaced by a cybernetic Red Guard. In this case, the bad word was "Palestine", which you claim has been "associated with anti-Semitism" for 2800 years since the Assyrians conquered the Philistines (along with ten of the twelve tribes of Israel). Alas, the Assyrians conquered dozens of peoples and there is zero evidence that they had any particular animus towards Jews and Philistines greater than they had towards, say, Egyptians and Persians. "Assyrian anti Semitism" is ahistorical make believe. The fact that you believe antisemitism to be "associated" with the 700BC Assyrian war machine is not a reference to historical reality but to the current Kabuki theatre which has supplanted serious political thinking. You may have a group of people like you who believe in this "association" with anti-semitism, but this has no influence on historical reality and no matter how many people may believe that the Assyrians were "associated" with ice cream, Donald Trump or electric cars, it is a lie.

For real conflict with real antisemites, scroll down the comments in my Frankfurt School lecture.

Let me help clarify your hypocrisy.

Referring to the pre-5th century "BCE" rather than the "BC" (which was current when the lecture was cut) is not only historically inaccurate but also carries an anti Christian political bias. There is nothing "common" about the "common era" the Chinese, the Aztecs, the Arabs among others had vastly different calendars and ideas about marking time. "BCE" is not common it is provincial. It is ad hoc Newspeak, recently created to obscure the Christian origins of our Western calendar and reckoning of time. I won't use it.

Physician, heal thyself.



@jameshunt6414 9 months ago

Aincent Israel was between Iraq and a hard place.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Puns are the lowest form of humor other than American political leadership.

@jameshunt6414 9 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I'm afraid I'm British and bad puns are rather a sport here. I do apologise.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)

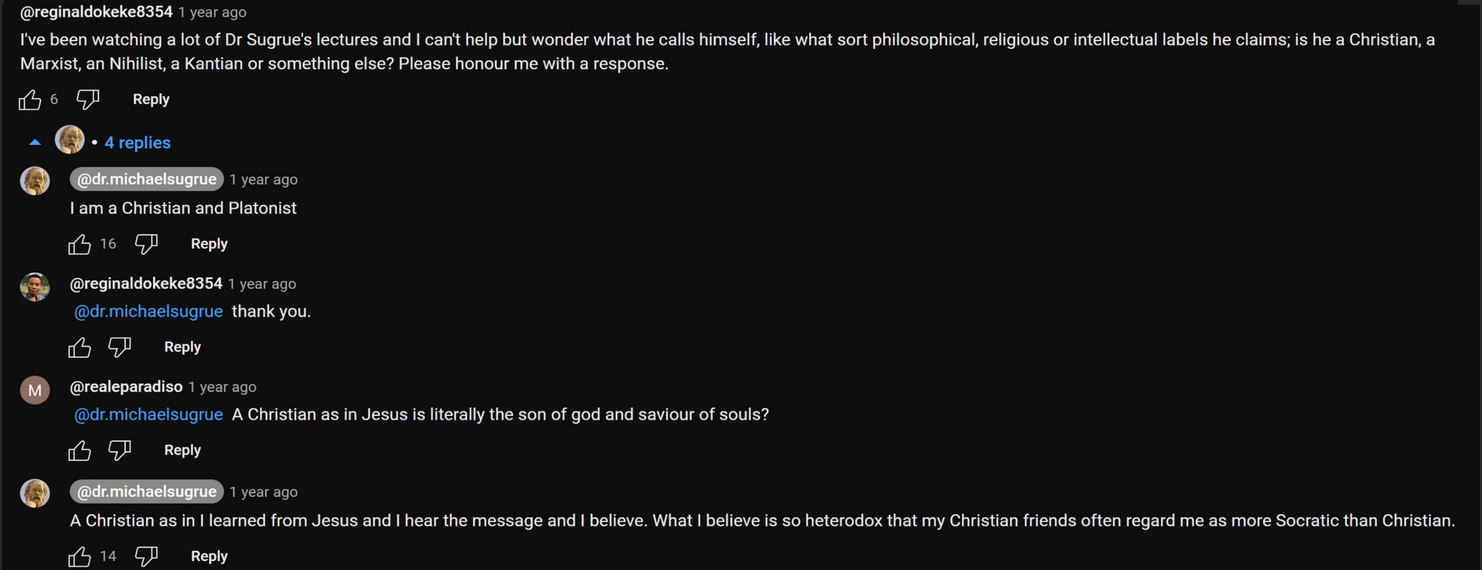
I must apologize to you for the dire humor of American politics.
I have announced that I am running for president on the surrealist party ticket.
My campaign slogan will be "No worse than the rest"

@jameshunt6414 9 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I hope it goes well. My general impression is that it's a thankless job with a lot of constraints that make it hard to make positive change, yet simultaneously a strain on whoever has the position. My first thought is of genuine concern for your health, but as I say I hope it goes well and that you are able to have some positive effect either just by running, or in the event that you win. I don't fancy your chances though, you seem relatively sane and normal, it doesn't seem to be the sort of thing the public goes for.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Dr. Staloff will be my VP running mate. His campaign slogan is catchy: "WTF Did You Expect? Biden/Trump 2024: Better Than We Deserve"



@reginaldokeke8354 1 year ago

I've been watching a lot of Dr Sugrue's lectures and I can't help but wonder what he calls himself, like what sort philosophical, religious or intellectual labels he claims; is he a Christian, a Marxist, an Nihilist, a Kantian or something else? Please honour me with a response.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I am a Christian and Platonist

@reginaldokeke8354 1 year ago

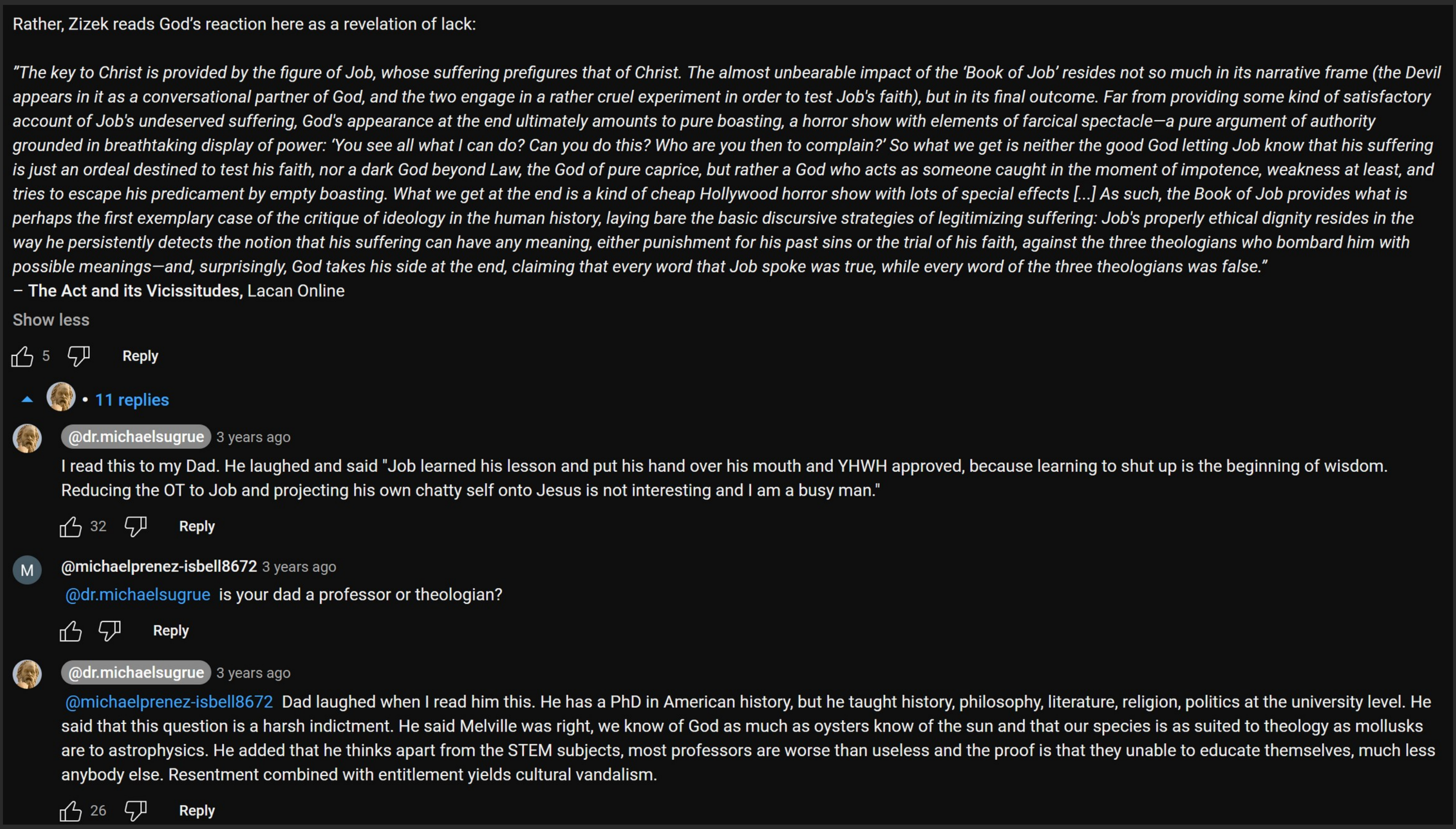
@dr.michaelsugrue thank you.

@realeparadiso 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue A Christian as in Jesus is literally the son of god and saviour of souls?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A Christian as in I learned from Jesus and I hear the message and I believe. What I believe is so heterodox that my Christian friends often regard me as more Socratic than Christian.



Rather, Zizek reads God's reaction here as a revelation of lack:

"The key to Christ is provided by the figure of Job, whose suffering prefigures that of Christ. The almost unbearable impact of the 'Book of Job' resides not so much in its narrative frame (the Devil appears in it as a conversational partner of God, and the two engage in a rather cruel experiment in order to test Job's faith), but in its final outcome. Far from providing some kind of satisfactory account of Job's undeserved suffering, God's appearance at the end ultimately amounts to pure boasting, a horror show with elements of farcical spectacle—a pure argument of authority grounded in breathtaking display of power: 'You see all what I can do? Can you do this? Who are you then to complain?' So what we get is neither the good God letting Job know that his suffering is just an ordeal destined to test his faith, nor a dark God beyond Law, the God of pure caprice, but rather a God who acts as someone caught in the moment of impotence, weakness at least, and tries to escape his predicament by empty boasting. What we get at the end is a kind of cheap Hollywood horror show with lots of special effects [...] As such, the Book of Job provides what is perhaps the first exemplary case of the critique of ideology in the human history, laying bare the basic discursive strategies of legitimizing suffering: Job's properly ethical dignity resides in the way he persistently detects the notion that his suffering can have any meaning, either punishment for his past sins or the trial of his faith, against the three theologians who bombard him with possible meanings—and, surprisingly, God takes his side at the end, claiming that every word that Job spoke was true, while every word of the three theologians was false."
– **The Act and its Vicissitudes,** Lacan Online

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

I read this to my Dad. He laughed and said "Job learned his lesson and put his hand over his mouth and YHWH approved, because learning to shut up is the beginning of wisdom. Reducing the OT to Job and projecting his own chatty self onto Jesus is not interesting and I am a busy man."

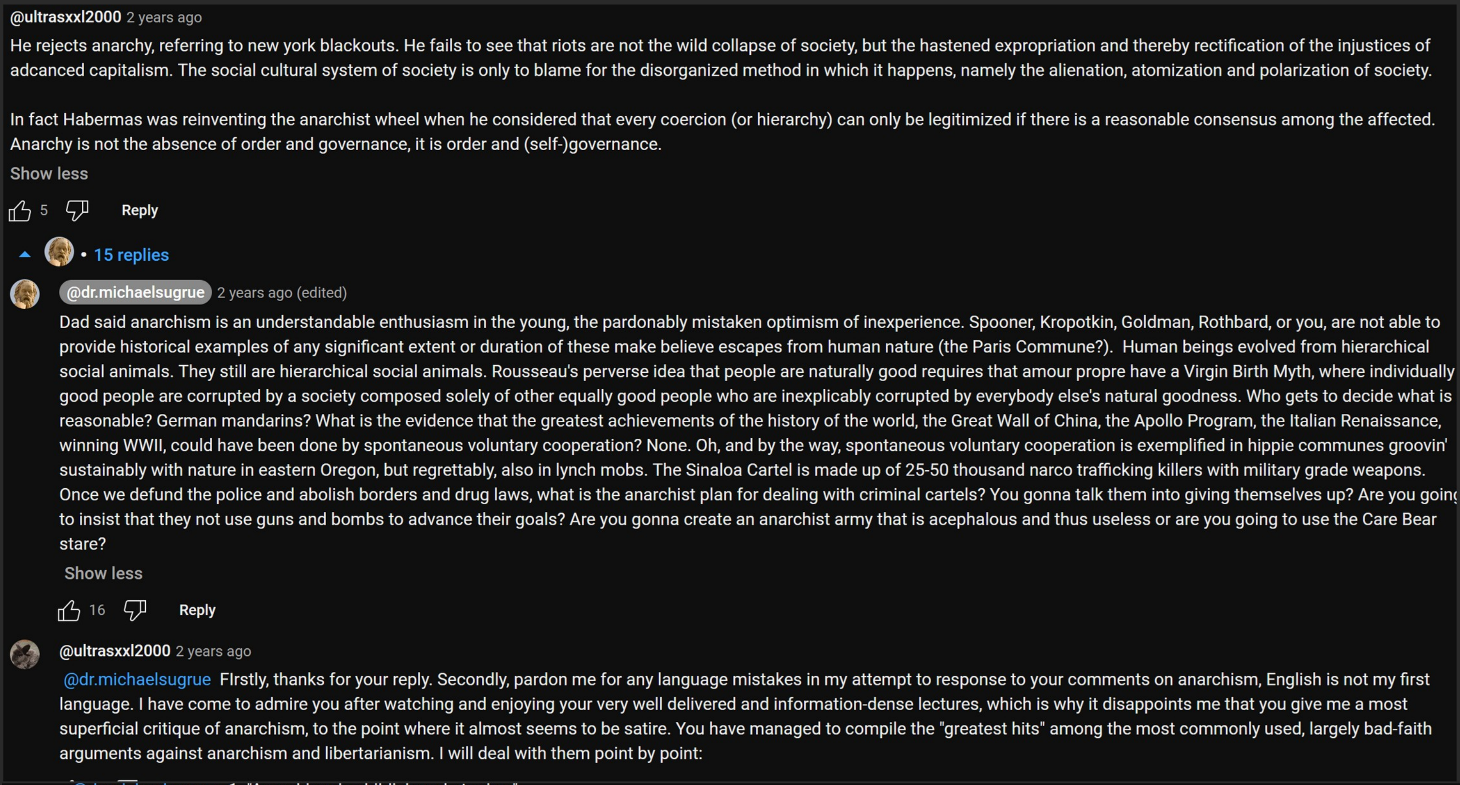
@michaelprenez-isbell8672 3 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue is your dad a professor or theologian?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

@michaelprenez-isbell8672 Dad laughed when I read him this. He has a PhD in American history, but he taught history, philosophy, literature, religion, politics at the university level. He said that this question is a harsh indictment. He said Melville was right, we know of God as much as oysters know of the sun and that our species is as suited to theology as mollusks are to astrophysics. He added that he thinks apart from the STEM subjects, most professors are worse than useless and the proof is that they unable to educate themselves, much less anybody else. Resentment combined with entitlement yields cultural vandalism.

Habermas' Critical Theory



@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

He rejects anarchy, referring to new york blackouts. He fails to see that riots are not the wild collapse of society, but the hastened expropriation and thereby rectification of the injustices of adcanced capitalism. The social cultural system of society is only to blame for the disorganized method in which it happens, namely the alienation, atomization and polarization of society.

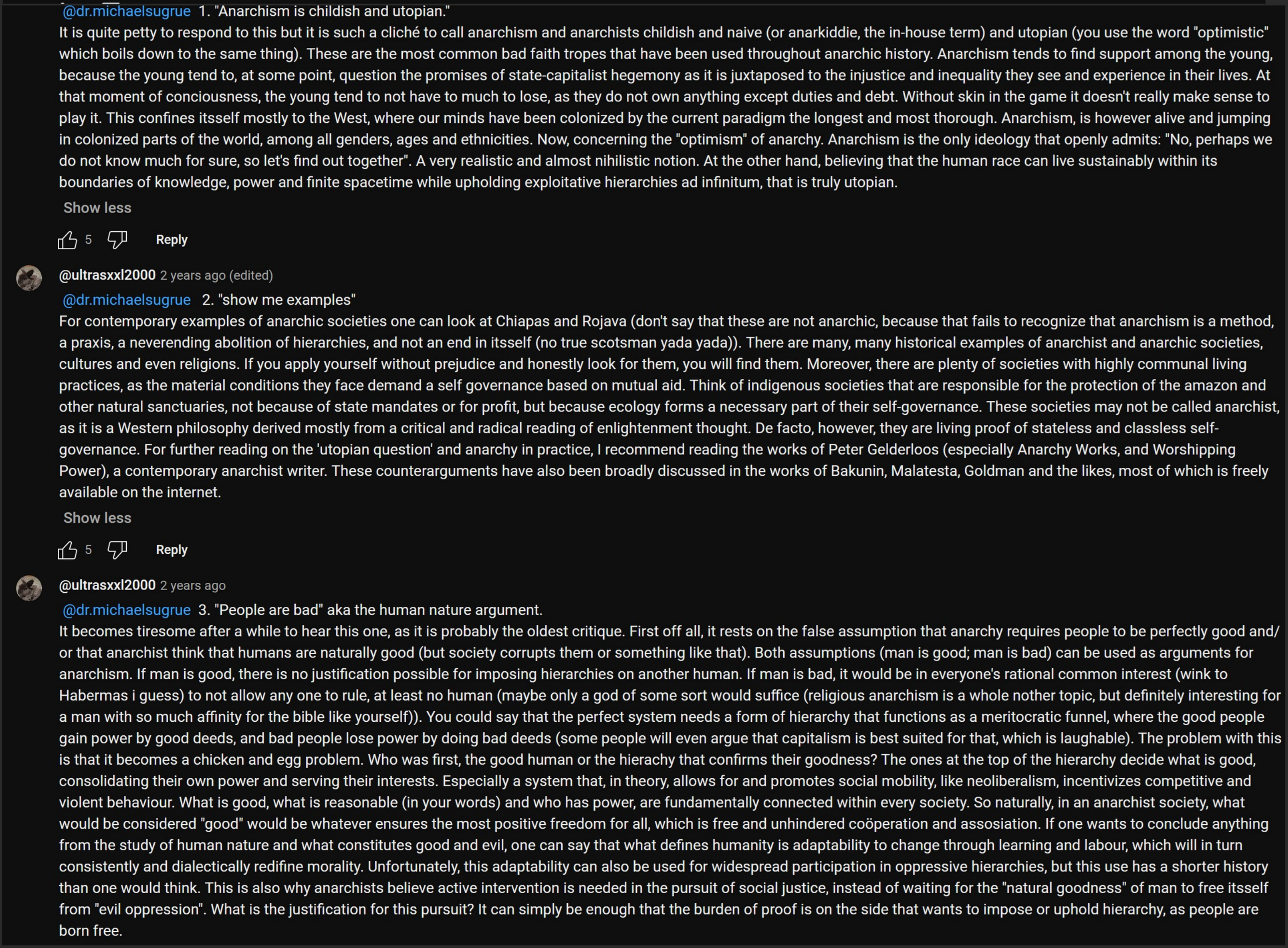
In fact Habermas was reinventing the anarchist wheel when he considered that every coercion (or hierarchy) can only be legitimized if there is a reasonable consensus among the affected. Anarchy is not the absence of order and governance, it is order and (self-)governance.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said anarchism is an understandable enthusiasm in the young, the pardonably mistaken optimism of inexperience. Spooner, Kropotkin, Goldman, Rothbard, or you, are not able to provide historical examples of any significant extent or duration of these make believe escapes from human nature (the Paris Commune?). Human beings evolved from hierarchical social animals. They still are hierarchical social animals. Rousseau's perverse idea that people are naturally good requires that amour propre have a Virgin Birth Myth, where individually good people are corrupted by a society composed solely of other equally good people who are inexplicably corrupted by everybody else's natural goodness. Who gets to decide what is reasonable? German mandarins? What is the evidence that the greatest achievements of the history of the world, the Great Wall of China, the Apollo Program, the Italian Renaissance, winning WWII, could have been done by spontaneous voluntary cooperation? None. Oh, and by the way, spontaneous voluntary cooperation is exemplified in hippie communes groovin' sustainably with nature in eastern Oregon, but regrettably, also in lynch mobs. The Sinaloa Cartel is made up of 25-50 thousand narco trafficking killers with military grade weapons. Once we defund the police and abolish borders and drug laws, what is the anarchist plan for dealing with criminal cartels? You gonna talk them into giving themselves up? Are you goin to insist that they not use guns and bombs to advance their goals? Are you gonna create an anarchist army that is acephalous and thus useless or are you going to use the Care Bear stare?

@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue FIrstly, thanks for your reply. Secondly, pardon me for any language mistakes in my attempt to response to your comments on anarchism, English is not my first language. I have come to admire you after watching and enjoying your very well delivered and information-dense lectures, which is why it disappoints me that you give me a most superficial critique of anarchism, to the point where it almost seems to be satire. You have managed to compile the "greatest hits" among the most commonly used, largely bad-faith arguments against anarchism and libertarianism. I will deal with them point by point:



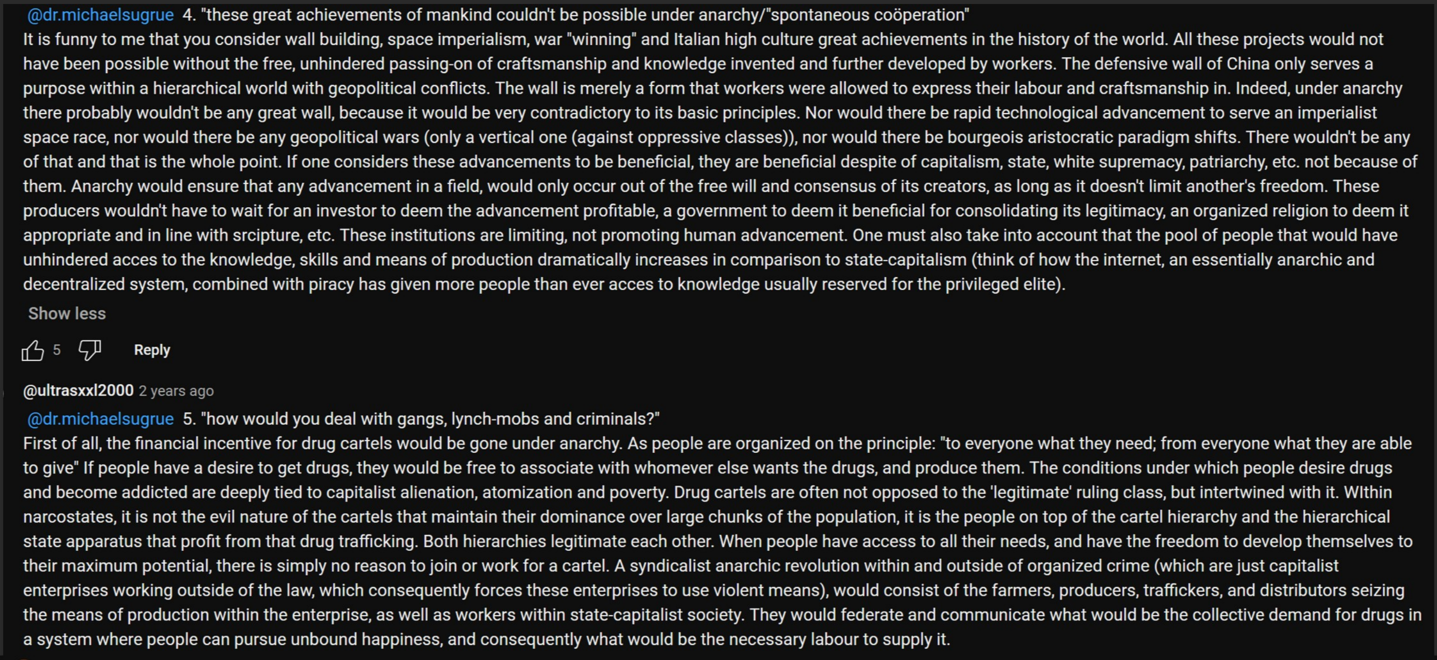
@dr.michaelsugrue 1. "Anarchism is childish and utopian."
It is quite petty to respond to this but it is such a cliché to call anarchism and anarchists childish and naive (or anarkiddie, the in-house term) and utopian (you use the word "optimistic" which boils down to the same thing). These are the most common bad faith tropes that have been used throughout anarchist history. Anarchism tends to find support among the young, because the young tend to, at some point, question the promises of state-capitalist hegemony as it is juxtaposed to the injustice and inequality they see and experience in their lives. At that moment of conciousness, the young tend to not have to much to lose, as they do not own anything except duties and debt. Without skin in the game it doesn't really make sense to play it. This confines itsself mostly to the West, where our minds have been colonized by the current paradigm the longest and most thorough. Anarchism, is however alive and jumping in colonized parts of the world, among all genders, ages and ethnicities. Now, concerning the "optimism" of anarchy. Anarchism is the only ideology that openly admits: "No, perhaps we do not know much for sure, so let's find out together". A very realistic and almost nihilistic notion. At the other hand, believing that the human race can live sustainably within its boundaries of knowledge, power and finite spacetime while upholding exploitative hierarchies ad infinitum, that is truly utopian.

@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue 2. "show me examples"
For contemporary examples of anarchic societies one can look at Chiapas and Rojava (don't say that these are not anarchic, because that fails to recognize that anarchism is a method, a praxis, a neverending abolition of hierarchies, and not an end in itsself (no true scotsman yada yada)). There are many, many historical examples of anarchist and anarchic societies, cultures and even religions. If you apply yourself without prejudice and honestly look for them, you will find them. Moreover, there are plenty of societies with highly communal living practices, as the material conditions they face demand a self governance based on mutual aid. Think of indigenous societies that are responsible for the protection of the amazon and other natural sanctuaries, not because of state mandates or for profit, but because ecology forms a necessary part of their self-governance. These societies may not be called anarchist, as it is a Western philosophy derived mostly from a critical and radical reading of enlightenment thought. De facto, however, they are living proof of stateless and classless self-governance. For further reading on the 'utopian question' and anarchy in practice, I recommend reading the works of Peter Gelderloos (especially Anarchy Works, and Worshipping Power), a contemporary anarchist writer. These counterarguments have also been broadly discussed in the works of Bakunin, Malatesta, Goldman and the likes, most of which is freely available on the internet.

@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

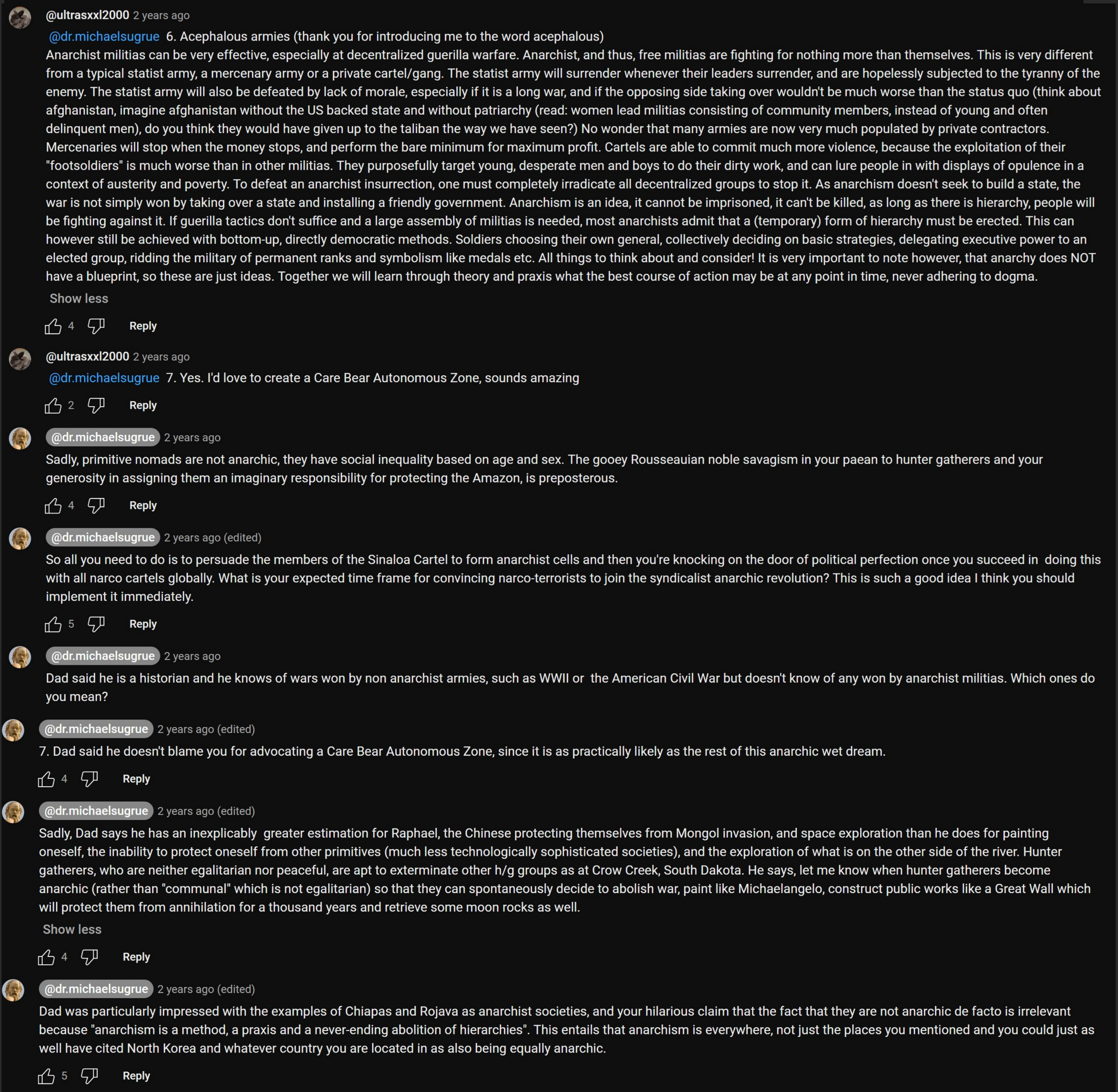
@dr.michaelsugrue 3. "People are bad" aka the human nature argument.
It becomes tiresome after a while to hear this one, as it is probably the oldest critique. First off all, it rests on the false assumption that anarchy requires people to be perfectly good and/or that anarchist think that humans are naturally good (but society corrupts them or something like that). Both assumptions (man is good; man is bad) can be used as arguments for anarchism. If man is good, there is no justification possible for imposing hierarchies on another human. If man is bad, it would be in everyone's rational common interest (wink to Habermas i guess) to not allow any one to rule, at least no human (maybe only a god of some sort would suffice (religious anarchism is a whole nother topic, but definitely interesting for a man with so much affinity for the bible like yourself)). You could say that the perfect system needs a form of hierarchy that functions as a meritocratic funnel, where the good people gain power by good deeds, and bad people lose power by doing bad deeds (some people will even argue that capitalism is best suited for that, which is laughable). The problem with this is that it becomes a chicken and egg problem. Who was first, the good human or the hierachy that confirms their goodness? The ones at the top of the hierarchy decide what is good, consolidating their own power and serving their interests. Especially a system that, in theory, allows for and promotes social mobility, like neoliberalism, incentivizes competitive and violent behaviour. What is good, what is reasonable (in your words) and who has power, are fundamentally connected within every society. So naturally, in an anarchist society, what would be considered "good" would be whatever ensures the most positive freedom for all, which is free and unhindered coöperation and assosiation. If one wants to conclude anything from the study of human nature and what constitutes good and evil, one can say that what defines humanity is adaptability to change through learning and labour, which will in turn consistently and dialectically redifine morality. Unfortunately, this adaptability can also be used for widespread participation in oppressive hierarchies, but this use has a shorter history than one would think. This is also why anarchists believe active intervention is needed in the pursuit of social justice, instead of waiting for the "natural goodness" of man to free itsself from "evil oppression". What is the justification for this pursuit? It can simply be enough that the burden of proof is on the side that wants to impose or uphold hierarchy, as people are born free.



@dr.michaelsugrue 4. "these great achievements of mankind couldn't be possible under anarchy/"spontaneous coöperation"
It is funny to me that you consider wall building, space imperialism, war "winning" and Italian high culture great achievements in the history of the world. All these projects would not have been possible without the free, unhindered passing-on of craftsmanship and knowledge invented and further developed by workers. The defensive wall of China only serves a purpose within a hierarchical world with geopolitical conflicts. The wall is merely a form that workers were allowed to express their labour and craftsmanship in. Indeed, under anarchy there probably wouldn't be any great wall, because it would be very contradictory to its basic principles. Nor would there be rapid technological advancement to serve an imperialist space race, nor would there be any geopolitical wars (only a vertical one (against oppressive classes)), nor would there be bourgeois aristocratic paradigm shifts. There wouldn't be any of that and that is the whole point. If one considers these advancements to be beneficial, they are beneficial despite of capitalism, state, white supremacy, patriarchy, etc. not because of them. Anarchy would ensure that any advancement in a field, would only occur out of the free will and consensus of its creators, as long as it doesn't limit another's freedom. These producers wouldn't have to wait for an investor to deem the advancement profitable, a government to deem it beneficial for consolidating its legitimacy, an organized religion to deem it appropriate and in line with srcipture, etc. These institutions are limiting, not promoting human advancement. One must also take into account that the pool of people that would have unhindered acces to the knowledge, skills and means of production dramatically increases in comparison to state-capitalism (think of how the internet, an essentially anarchic and decentralized system, combined with piracy has given more people than ever acces to knowledge usually reserved for the privileged elite).

@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue 5. "how would you deal with gangs, lynch-mobs and criminals?"
First of all, the financial incentive for drug cartels would be gone under anarchy. As people are organized on the principle: "to everyone what they need; from everyone what they are able to give" If people have a desire to get drugs, they would be free to associate with whomever else wants the drugs, and produce them. The conditions under which people desire drugs and become addicted are deeply tied to capitalist alienation, atomization and poverty. Drug cartels are often not opposed to the 'legitimate' ruling class, but intertwined with it. WIthin narcostates, it is not the evil nature of the cartels that maintain their dominance over large chunks of the population, it is the people on top of the cartel hierarchy and the hierarchical state apparatus that profit from that drug trafficking. Both hierarchies legitimate each other. When people have access to all their needs, and have the freedom to develop themselves to their maximum potential, there is simply no reason to join or work for a cartel. A syndicalist anarchic revolution within and outside of organized crime (which are just capitalist enterprises working outside of the law, which consequently forces these enterprises to use violent means), would consist of the farmers, producers, traffickers, and distributors seizing the means of production within the enterprise, as well as workers within state-capitalist society. They would federate and communicate what would be the collective demand for drugs in a system where people can pursue unbound happiness, and consequently what would be the necessary labour to supply it.



@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue 6. Acephalous armies (thank you for introducing me to the word acephalous)
Anarchist militias can be very effective, especially at decentralized guerilla warfare. Anarchist, and thus, free militias are fighting for nothing more than themselves. This is very different from a typical statist army, a mercenary army or a private cartel/gang. The statist army will surrender whenever their leaders surrender, and are hopelessly subjected to the tyranny of the enemy. The statist army will also be defeated by lack of morale, especially if it is a long war, and if the opposing side taking over wouldn't be much worse than the status quo (think about afghanistan, imagine afghanistan without the US backed state and without patriarchy (read: women lead militias consisting of community members, instead of young and often delinquent men), do you think they would have given up to the taliban the way we have seen?) No wonder that many armies are now very much populated by private contractors. Mercenaries will stop when the money stops, and perform the bare minimum for maximum profit. Cartels are able to commit much more violence, because the exploitation of their "footsoldiers" is much worse than in other militias. They purposefully target young, desperate men and boys to do their dirty work, and can lure people in with displays of opulence in a context of austerity and poverty. To defeat an anarchist insurrection, one must completely irradicate all decentralized groups to stop it. As anarchism doesn't seek to build a state, the war is not simply won by taking over a state and installing a friendly government. Anarchism is an idea, it cannot be imprisoned, it can't be killed, as long as there is hierarchy, people will be fighting against it. If guerilla tactics don't suffice and a large assembly of militias is needed, most anarchists admit that a (temporary) form of hierarchy must be erected. This can however still be achieved with bottom-up, directly democratic methods. Soldiers choosing their own general, collectively deciding on basic strategies, delegating executive power to an elected group, ridding the military of permanent ranks and symbolism like medals etc. All things to think about and consider! It is very important to note however, that anarchy does NOT have a blueprint, so these are just ideas. Together we will learn through theory and praxis what the best course of action may be at any point in time, never adhering to dogma.

@ultrasxxl2000 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue 7. Yes. I'd love to create a Care Bear Autonomous Zone, sounds amazing

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Sadly, primitive nomads are not anarchic, they have social inequality based on age and sex. The gooey Rousseauian noble savagism in your paean to hunter gatherers and your generosity in assigning them an imaginary responsibility for protecting the Amazon, is preposterous.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

So all you need to do is to persuade the members of the Sinaloa Cartel to form anarchist cells and then you're knocking on the door of political perfection once you succeed in doing this with all narco cartels globally. What is your expected time frame for convincing narco-terrorists to join the syndicalist anarchic revolution? This is such a good idea I think you should implement it immediately.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he is a historian and he knows of wars won by non anarchist armies, such as WWII or the American Civil War but doesn't know of any won by anarchist militias. Which ones do you mean?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

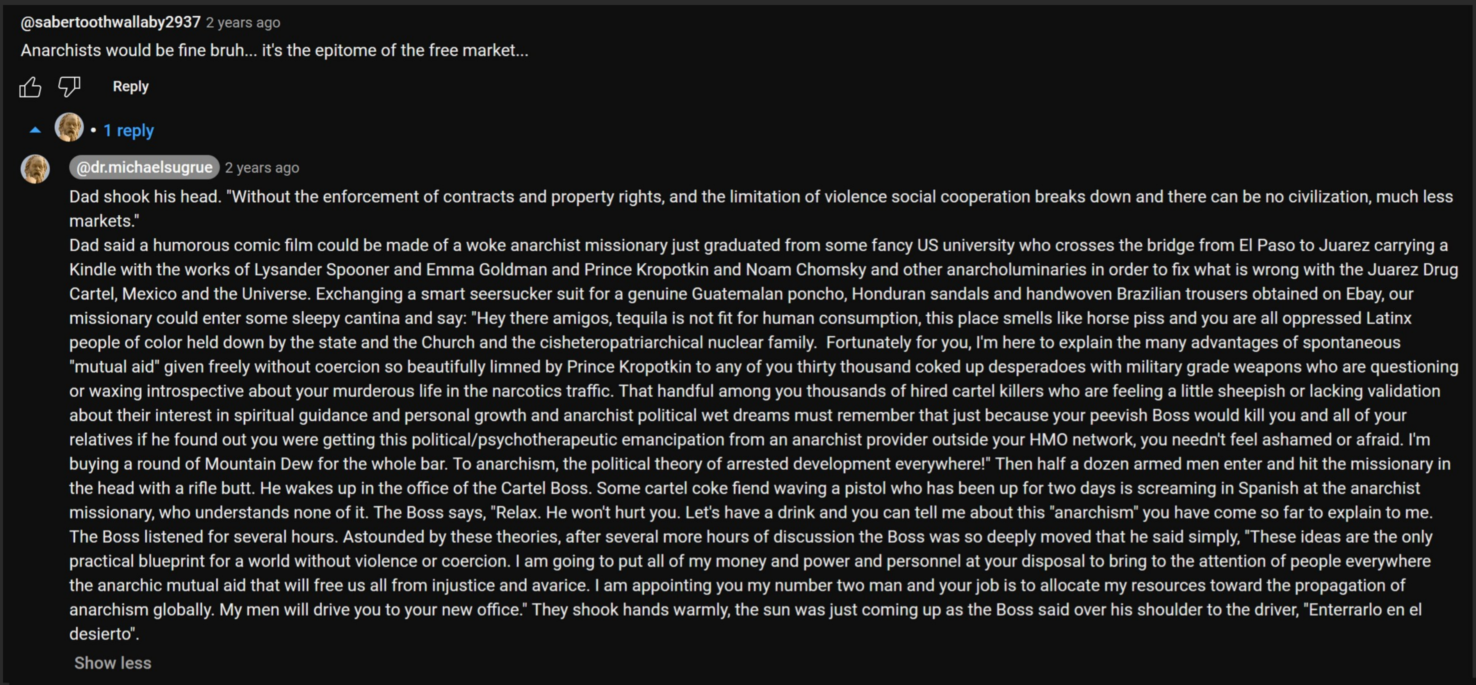
7. Dad said he doesn't blame you for advocating a Care Bear Autonomous Zone, since it is as practically likely as the rest of this anarchic wet dream.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Sadly, Dad says he has an inexplicably greater estimation for Raphael, the Chinese protecting themselves from Mongol invasion, and space exploration than he does for painting oneself, the inability to protect oneself from other primitives (much less technologically sophisticated societies), and the exploration of what is on the other side of the river. Hunter gatherers, who are neither egalitarian nor peaceful, are apt to exterminate other h/g groups as at Crow Creek, South Dakota. He says, let me know when hunter gatherers become anarchic (rather than "communal" which is not egalitarian) so that they can spontaneously decide to abolish war, paint like Michaelangelo, construct public works like a Great Wall which will protect them from annihilation for a thousand years and retrieve some moon rocks as well.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad was particularly impressed with the examples of Chiapas and Rojava as anarchist societies, and your hilarious claim that the fact that they are not anarchic de facto is irrelevant because "anarchism is a method, a praxis and a never-ending abolition of hierarchies". This entails that anarchism is everywhere, not just the places you mentioned and you could just as well have cited North Korea and whatever country you are located in as also being equally anarchic.



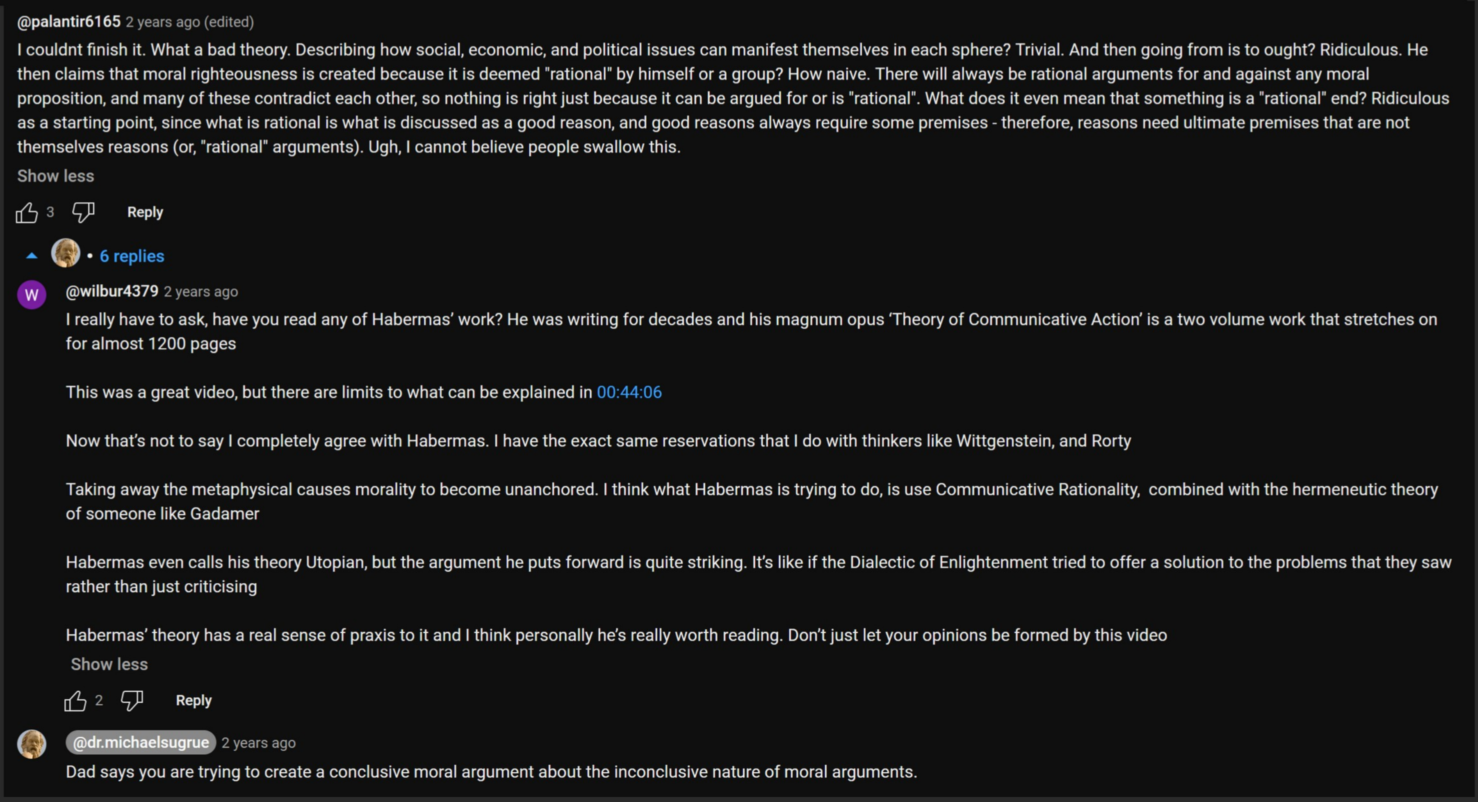
@sabertoothwallaby2937 2 years ago

Anarchists would be fine bruh... it's the epitome of the free market...

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad shook his head. "Without the enforcement of contracts and property rights, and the limitation of violence social cooperation breaks down and there can be no civilization, much less markets."

Dad said a humorous comic film could be made of a woke anarchist missionary just graduated from some fancy US university who crosses the bridge from El Paso to Juarez carrying a Kindle with the works of Lysander Spooner and Emma Goldman and Prince Kropotkin and Noam Chomsky and other anarcholuminaries in order to fix what is wrong with the Juarez Drug Cartel, Mexico and the Universe. Exchanging a smart seersucker suit for a genuine Guatemalan poncho, Honduran sandals and handwoven Brazilian trousers obtained on Ebay, our missionary could enter some sleepy cantina and say: "Hey there amigos, tequila is not fit for human consumption, this place smells like horse piss and you are all oppressed Latinx people of color held down by the state and the Church and the cisheteropatriarchical nuclear family. Fortunately for you, I'm here to explain the many advantages of spontaneous "mutual aid" given freely without coercion so beautifully limned by Prince Kropotkin to any of you thirty thousand coked up desperadoes with military grade weapons who are questioning or waxing introspective about your murderous life in the narcotics traffic. That handful among you thousands of hired cartel killers who are feeling a little sheepish or lacking validation about their interest in spiritual guidance and personal growth and anarchist political wet dreams must remember that just because your peevish Boss would kill you and all of your relatives if he found out you were getting this political/psychotherapeutic emancipation from an anarchist provider outside your HMO network, you needn't feel ashamed or afraid. I'm buying a round of Mountain Dew for the whole bar. To anarchism, the political theory of arrested development everywhere!" Then half a dozen armed men enter and hit the missionary in the head with a rifle butt. He wakes up in the office of the Cartel Boss. Some cartel coke fiend waving a pistol who has been up for two days is screaming in Spanish at the anarchist missionary, who understands none of it. The Boss says, "Relax. He won't hurt you. Let's have a drink and you can tell me about this "anarchism" you have come so far to explain to me. The Boss listened for several hours. Astounded by these theories, after several more hours of discussion the Boss was so deeply moved that he said simply, "These ideas are the only practical blueprint for a world without violence or coercion. I am going to put all of my money and power and personnel at your disposal to bring to the attention of people everywhere the anarchic mutual aid that will free us all from injustice and avarice. I am appointing you my number two man and your job is to allocate my resources toward the propagation of anarchism globally. My men will drive you to your new office." They shook hands warmly, the sun was just coming up as the Boss said over his shoulder to the driver, "Enterrarlo en el desierto".



@palantir6165 2 years ago (edited)

I couldnt finish it. What a bad theory. Describing how social, economic, and political issues can manifest themselves in each sphere? Trivial. And then going from is to ought? Ridiculous. He then claims that moral righteousness is created because it is deemed "rational" by himself or a group? How naive. There will always be rational arguments for and against any moral proposition, and many of these contradict each other, so nothing is right just because it can be argued for or is "rational". What does it even mean that something is a "rational" end? Ridiculous as a starting point, since what is rational is what is discussed as a good reason, and good reasons always require some premises - therefore, reasons need ultimate premises that are not themselves reasons (or, "rational" arguments). Ugh, I cannot believe people swallow this.

@wilbur4379 2 years ago

I really have to ask, have you read any of Habermas' work? He was writing for decades and his magnum opus 'Theory of Communicative Action' is a two volume work that stretches on for almost 1200 pages

This was a great video, but there are limits to what can be explained in 00:44:06

Now that's not to say I completely agree with Habermas. I have the exact same reservations that I do with thinkers like Wittgenstein, and Rorty

Taking away the metaphysical causes morality to become unanchored. I think what Habermas is trying to do, is use Communicative Rationality, combined with the hermeneutic theory of someone like Gadamer

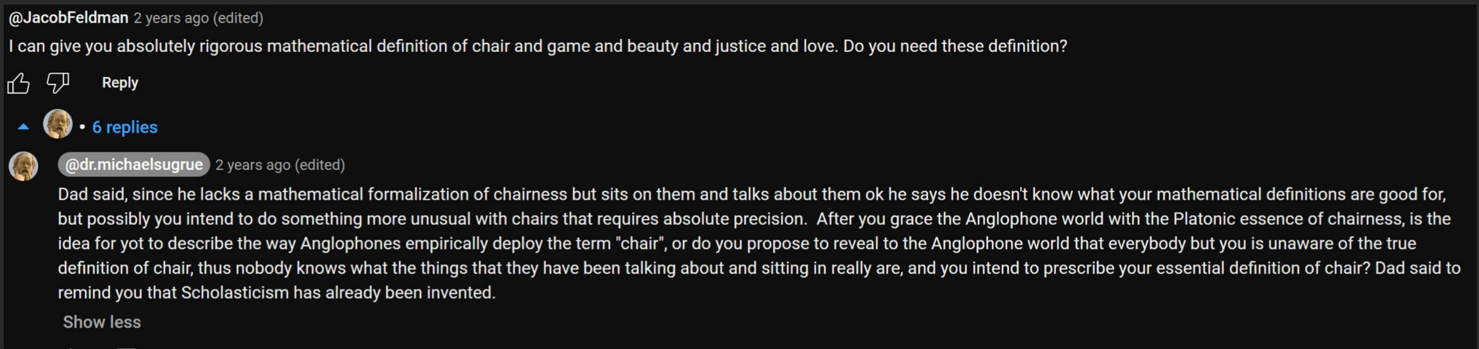
Habermas even calls his theory Utopian, but the argument he puts forward is quite striking. It's like if the Dialectic of Enlightenment tried to offer a solution to the problems that they saw rather than just criticising

Habermas' theory has a real sense of praxis to it and I think personally he's really worth reading. Don't just let your opinions be formed by this video

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says you are trying to create a conclusive moral argument about the inconclusive nature of moral arguments.

The Latter Wittgenstein: The Philosophy of Language

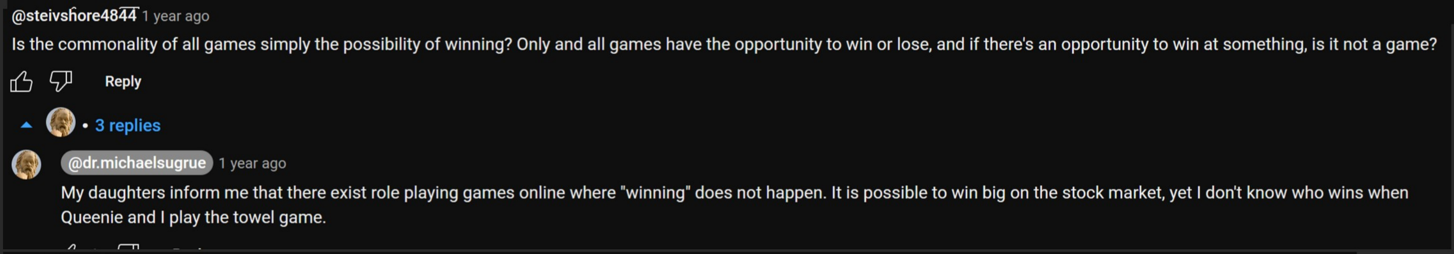


@JacobFeldman 2 years ago (edited)

I can give you absolutely rigorous mathematical definition of chair and game and beauty and justice and love. Do you need these definition?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, since he lacks a mathematical formalization of chairness but sits on them and talks about them ok he says he doesn't know what your mathematical definitions are good for, but possibly you intend to do something more unusual with chairs that requires absolute precision. After you grace the Anglophone world with the Platonic essence of chairness, is the idea for yot to describe the way Anglophones empirically deploy the term "chair", or do you propose to reveal to the Anglophone world that everybody but you is unaware of the true definition of chair, thus nobody knows what the things that they have been talking about and sitting in really are, and you intend to prescribe your essential definition of chair? Dad said to remind you that Scholasticism has already been invented.

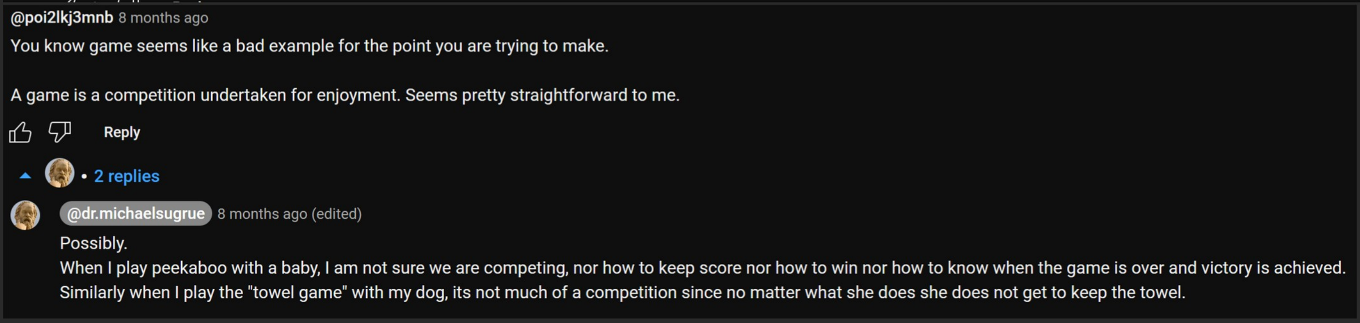


@steivshore4844 1 year ago

Is the commonality of all games simply the possibility of winning? Only and all games have the opportunity to win or lose, and if there's an opportunity to win at something, is it not a game?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

My daughters inform me that there exist role playing games online where "winning" does not happen. It is possible to win big on the stock market, yet I don't know who wins when Queenie and I play the towel game.



@poi2lkj3mnb 8 months ago

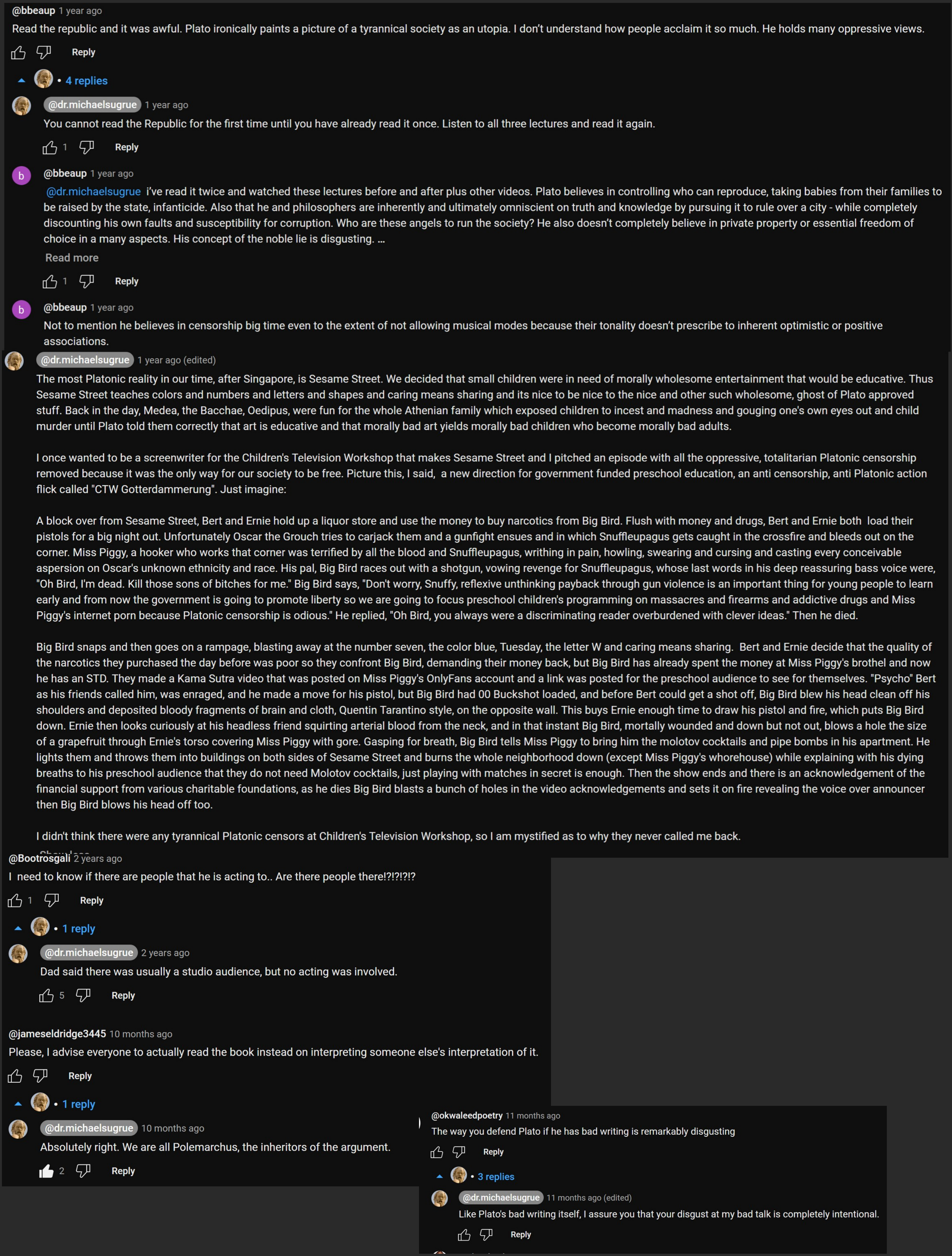
You know game seems like a bad example for the point you are trying to make.

A game is a competition undertaken for enjoyment. Seems pretty straightforward to me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago (edited)

Possibly.
When I play peekaboo with a baby, I am not sure we are competing, nor how to keep score nor how to win nor how to know when the game is over and victory is achieved.
Similarly when I play the "towel game" with my dog, its not much of a competition since no matter what she does she does not get to keep the towel.

Plato's Republic I: Justice, Power, and Knowledge



@bbeaup 1 year ago

Read the republic and it was awful. Plato ironically paints a picture of a tyrannical society as an utopia. I don't understand how people acclaim it so much. He holds many oppressive views.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You cannot read the Republic for the first time until you have already read it once. Listen to all three lectures and read it again.

@bbeaup 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue i've read it twice and watched these lectures before and after plus other videos. Plato believes in controlling who can reproduce, taking babies from their families to be raised by the state, infanticide. Also that he and philosophers are inherently and ultimately omniscient on truth and knowledge by pursuing it to rule over a city - while completely discounting his own faults and susceptibility for corruption. Who are these angels to run the society? He also doesn't completely believe in private property or essential freedom of choice in a many aspects. His concept of the noble lie is disgusting. ...

@bbeaup 1 year ago

Not to mention he believes in censorship big time even to the extent of not allowing musical modes because their tonality doesn't prescribe to inherent optimistic or positive associations.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

The most Platonic reality in our time, after Singapore, is Sesame Street. We decided that small children were in need of morally wholesome entertainment that would be educative. Thus Sesame Street teaches colors and numbers and letters and shapes and caring means sharing and its nice to be nice to the nice and other such wholesome, ghost of Plato approved stuff. Back in the day, Medea, the Bacchae, Oedipus, were fun for the whole Athenian family which exposed children to incest and madness and gouging one's own eyes out and child murder until Plato told them correctly that art is educative and that morally bad art yields morally bad children who become morally bad adults.

I once wanted to be a screenwriter for the Children's Television Workshop that makes Sesame Street and I pitched an episode with all the oppressive, totalitarian Platonic censorship removed because it was the only way for our society to be free. Picture this, I said, a new direction for government funded preschool education, an anti censorship, anti Platonic action flick called "CTW Gotterdammerung". Just imagine:

A block over from Sesame Street, Bert and Ernie hold up a liquor store and use the money to buy narcotics from Big Bird. Flush with money and drugs, Bert and Ernie both load their pistols for a big night out. Unfortunately Oscar the Grouch tries to carjack them and a gunfight ensues and in which Snuffleupagus gets caught in the crossfire and bleeds out on the corner. Miss Piggy, a hooker who works that corner was terrified by all the blood and Snuffleupagus, writhing in pain, howling, swearing and cursing and casting every conceivable aspersion on Oscar's unknown ethnicity and race. His pal, Big Bird races out with a shotgun, vowing revenge for Snuffleupagus, whose last words in his deep reassuring bass voice were, "Oh Bird, I'm dead. Kill those sons of bitches for me." Big Bird says, "Don't worry, Snuffy, reflexive unthinking payback through gun violence is an important thing for young people to learn early and from now the government is going to promote liberty so we are going to focus preschool children's programming on massacres and firearms and addictive drugs and Miss Piggy's internet porn because Platonic censorship is odious." He replied, "Oh Bird, you always were a discriminating reader overburdened with clever ideas." Then he died.

Big Bird snaps and then goes on a rampage, blasting away at the number seven, the color blue, Tuesday, the letter W and caring means sharing. Bert and Ernie decide that the quality of the narcotics they purchased the day before was poor so they confront Big Bird, demanding their money back, but Big Bird has already spent the money at Miss Piggy's brothel and now he has an STD. They made a Kama Sutra video that was posted on Miss Piggy's OnlyFans account and a link was posted for the preschool audience to see for themselves. "Psycho" Bert as his friends called him, was enraged, and he made a move for his pistol, but Big Bird had 00 Buckshot loaded, and before Bert could get a shot off, Big Bird blew his head clean off his shoulders and deposited bloody fragments of brain and cloth, Quentin Tarantino style, on the opposite wall. This buys Ernie enough time to draw his pistol and fire, which puts Big Bird down. Ernie then looks curiously at his headless friend squirting arterial blood from the neck, and in that instant Big Bird, mortally wounded and down but not out, blows a hole the size of a grapefruit through Ernie's torso covering Miss Piggy with gore. Gasping for breath, Big Bird tells Miss Piggy to bring him the molotov cocktails and pipe bombs in his apartment. He lights them and throws them into buildings on both sides of Sesame Street and burns the whole neighborhood down (except Miss Piggy's whorehouse) while explaining with his dying breaths to his preschool audience that they do not need Molotov cocktails, just playing with matches in secret is enough. Then the show ends and there is an acknowledgement of the financial support from various charitable foundations, as he dies Big Bird blasts a bunch of holes in the video acknowledgements and sets it on fire revealing the voice over announcer then Big Bird blows his head off too.

I didn't think there were any tyrannical Platonic censors at Children's Television Workshop, so I am mystified as to why they never called me back.

@Bootrosgali 2 years ago

I need to know if there are people that he is acting to.. Are there people there!?!?!?!?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said there was usually a studio audience, but no acting was involved.

@jameseldridge3445 10 months ago

Please, I advise everyone to actually read the book instead on interpreting someone else's interpretation of it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

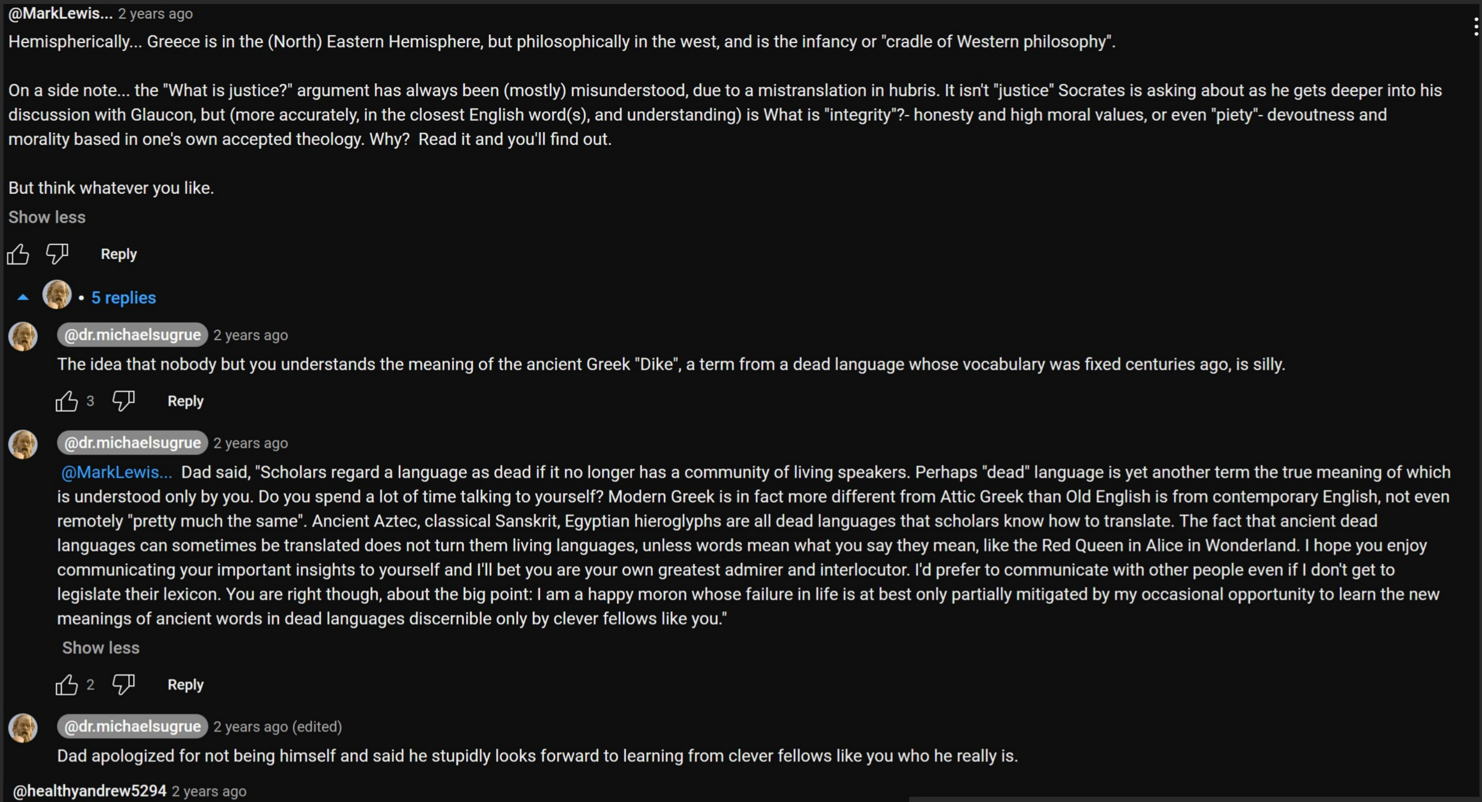
Absolutely right. We are all Polemarchus, the inheritors of the argument.

@okwaleedpoetry 11 months ago

The way you defend Plato if he has bad writing is remarkably disgusting

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago (edited)

Like Plato's bad writing itself, I assure you that your disgust at my bad talk is completely intentional.



@MarkLewis... 2 years ago

Hemispherically... Greece is in the (North) Eastern Hemisphere, but philosophically in the west, and is the infancy or "cradle of Western philosophy".

On a side note... the "What is justice?" argument has always been (mostly) misunderstood, due to a mistranslation in hubris. It isn't "justice" Socrates is asking about as he gets deeper into his discussion with Glaucon, but (more accurately, in the closest English word(s), and understanding) is What is "integrity"?- honesty and high moral values, or even "piety"- devoutness and morality based in one's own accepted theology. Why? Read it and you'll find out.

But think whatever you like.

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

The idea that nobody but you understands the meaning of the ancient Greek "Dike", a term from a dead language whose vocabulary was fixed centuries ago, is silly.

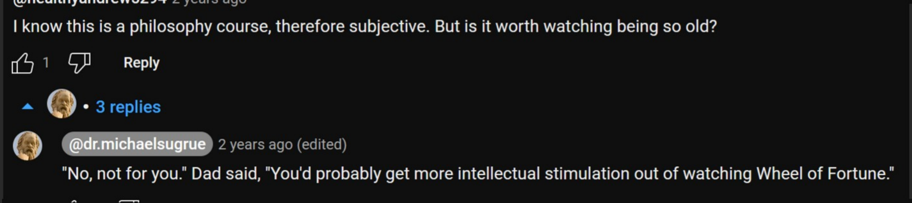
@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@MarkLewis... Dad said, "Scholars regard a language as dead if it no longer has a community of living speakers. Perhaps "dead" language is yet another term the true meaning of which is understood only by you. Do you spend a lot of time talking to yourself? Modern Greek is in fact more different from Attic Greek than Old English is from contemporary English, not even remotely "pretty much the same". Ancient Aztec, classical Sanskrit, Egyptian hieroglyphs are all dead languages that scholars know how to translate. The fact that ancient dead languages can sometimes be translated does not turn them living languages, unless words mean what you say they mean, like the Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland. I hope you enjoy communicating your important insights to yourself and I'll bet you are your own greatest admirer and interlocutor. I'd prefer to communicate with other people even if I don't get to legislate their lexicon. You are right though, about the big point: I am a happy moron whose failure in life is at best only partially mitigated by my occasional opportunity to learn the new meanings of ancient words in dead languages discernible only by clever fellows like you."

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad apologized for not being himself and said he stupidly looks forward to learning from clever fellows like you who he really is.

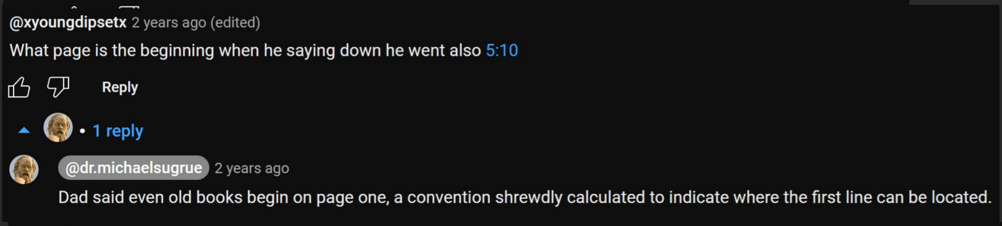


@healthyandrew5294 2 years ago

I know this is a philosophy course, therefore subjective. But is it worth watching being so old?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

"No, not for you." Dad said, "You'd probably get more intellectual stimulation out of watching Wheel of Fortune."

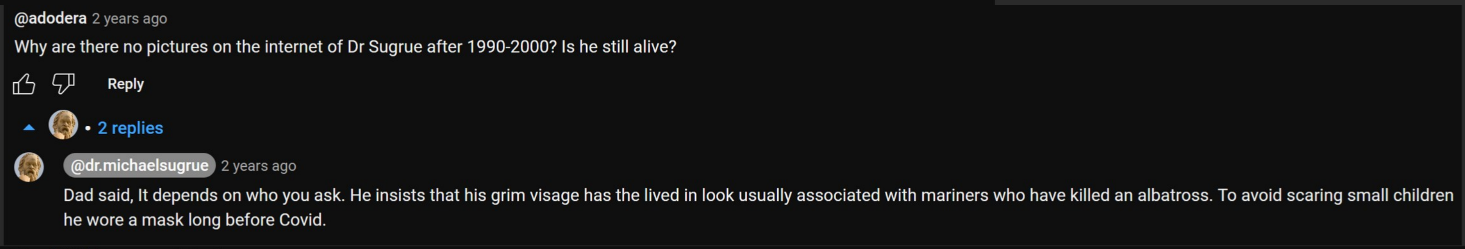


@xyoungdipsetx 2 years ago (edited)

What page is the beginning when he saying down he went also 5:10

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said even old books begin on page one, a convention shrewdly calculated to indicate where the first line can be located.

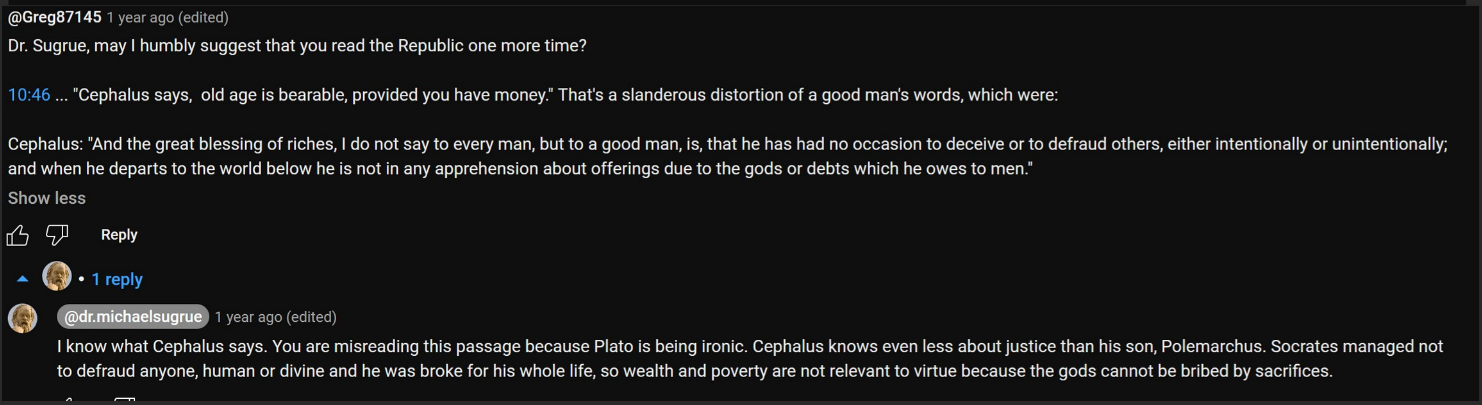


@adodera 2 years ago

Why are there no pictures on the internet of Dr Sugrue after 1990-2000? Is he still alive?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, It depends on who you ask. He insists that his grim visage has the lived in look usually associated with mariners who have killed an albatross. To avoid scaring small children he wore a mask long before Covid.



@Greg87145 1 year ago (edited)

Dr. Sugrue, may I humbly suggest that you read the Republic one more time?

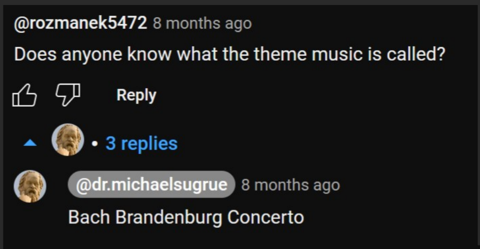
10:46 ... "Cephalus says, old age is bearable, provided you have money." That's a slanderous distortion of a good man's words, which were:

Cephalus: "And the great blessing of riches, I do not say to every man, but to a good man, is, that he has had no occasion to deceive or to defraud others, either intentionally or unintentionally; and when he departs to the world below he is not in any apprehension about offerings due to the gods or debts which he owes to men."

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I know what Cephalus says. You are misreading this passage because Plato is being ironic. Cephalus knows even less about justice than his son, Polemarchus. Socrates managed not to defraud anyone, human or divine and he was broke for his whole life, so wealth and poverty are not relevant to virtue because the gods cannot be bribed by sacrifices.

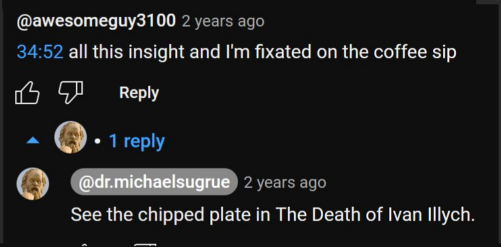


@rozmanek5472 8 months ago

Does anyone know what the theme music is called?

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Bach Brandenburg Concerto

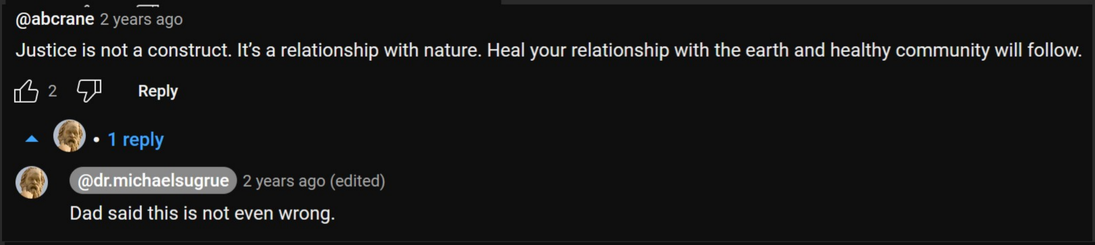


@awesomeguy3100 2 years ago

34:52 all this insight and I'm fixated on the coffee sip

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

See the chipped plate in The Death of Ivan Illych.

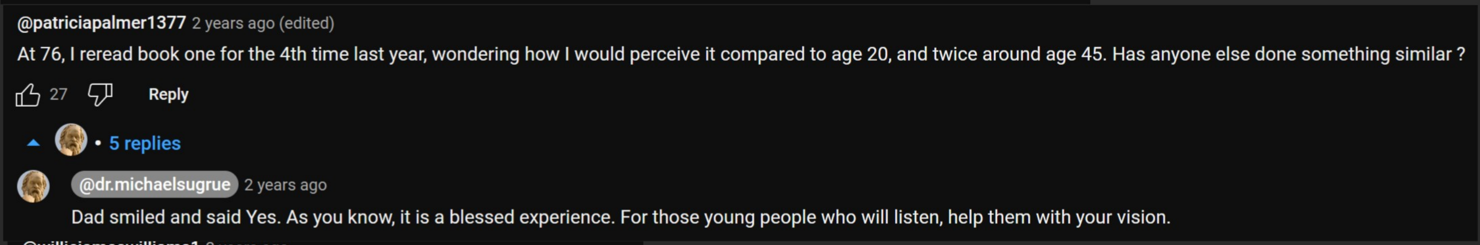


@abcrane 2 years ago

Justice is not a construct. It's a relationship with nature. Heal your relationship with the earth and healthy community will follow.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said this is not even wrong.

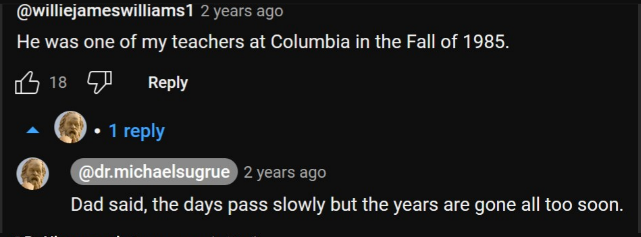


@patriciapalmer1377 2 years ago (edited)

At 76, I reread book one for the 4th time last year, wondering how I would perceive it compared to age 20, and twice around age 45. Has anyone else done something similar ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad smiled and said Yes. As you know, it is a blessed experience. For those young people who will listen, help them with your vision.

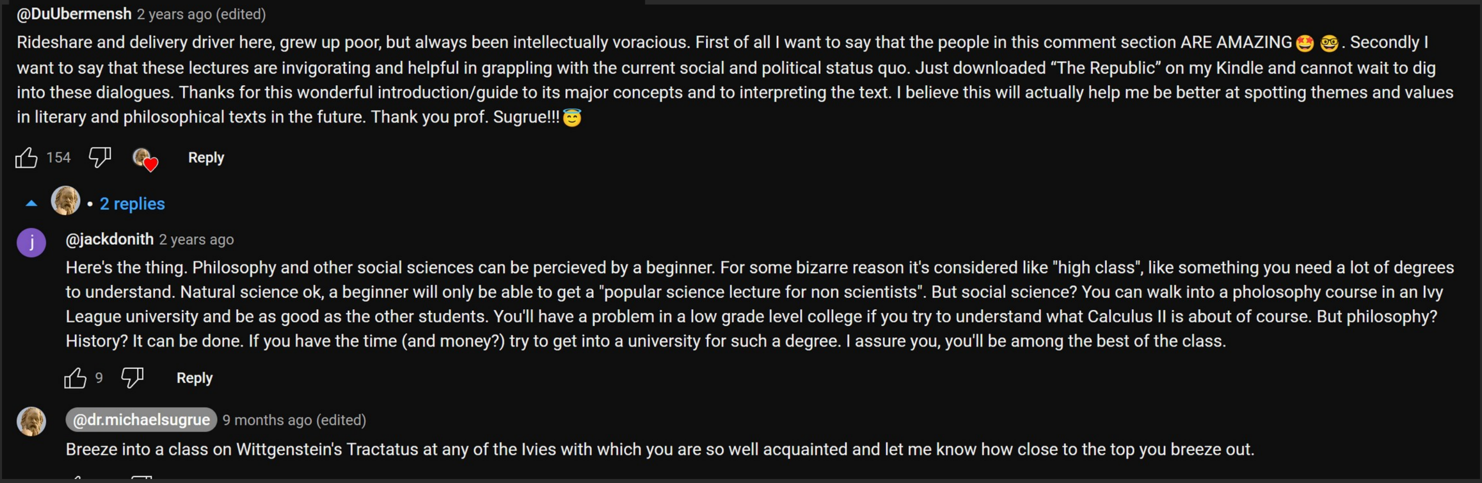


@williejameswilliams1 2 years ago

He was one of my teachers at Columbia in the Fall of 1985.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, the days pass slowly but the years are gone all too soon.



@DuUbermensh 2 years ago (edited)

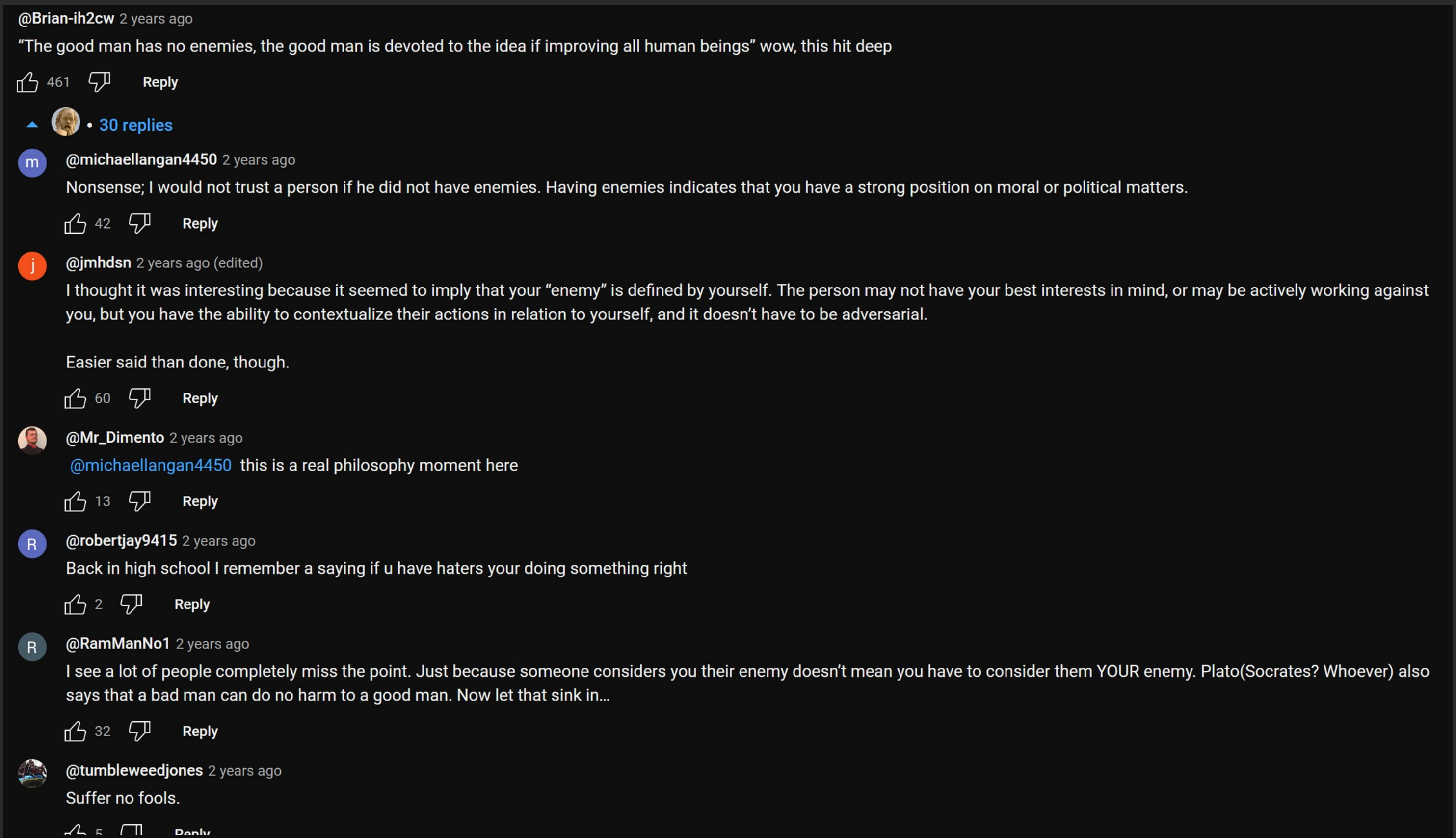
Rideshare and delivery driver here, grew up poor, but always been intellectually voracious. First of all I want to say that the people in this comment section ARE AMAZING 🤩 🤓. Secondly I want to say that these lectures are invigorating and helpful in grappling with the current social and political status quo. Just downloaded "The Republic" on my Kindle and cannot wait to dig into these dialogues. Thanks for this wonderful introduction/guide to its major concepts and to interpreting the text. I believe this will actually help me be better at spotting themes and values in literary and philosophical texts in the future. Thank you prof. Sugrue!!!😇

@jackdonith 2 years ago

Here's the thing. Philosophy and other social sciences can be percieved by a beginner. For some bizarre reason it's considered like "high class", like something you need a lot of degrees to understand. Natural science ok, a beginner will only be able to get a "popular science lecture for non scientists". But social science? You can walk into a pholosophy course in an Ivy League university and be as good as the other students. You'll have a problem in a low grade level college if you try to understand what Calculus II is about of course. But philosophy? History? It can be done. If you have the time (and money?) try to get into a university for such a degree. I assure you, you'll be among the best of the class.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)

Breeze into a class on Wittgenstein's Tractatus at any of the Ivies with which you are so well acquainted and let me know how close to the top you breeze out.



@Brian-ih2cw 2 years ago

“The good man has no enemies, the good man is devoted to the idea if improving all human beings” wow, this hit deep

@michaellangan4450 2 years ago

Nonsense; I would not trust a person if he did not have enemies. Having enemies indicates that you have a strong position on moral or political matters.

@jmhdsn 2 years ago (edited)

I thought it was interesting because it seemed to imply that your “enemy” is defined by yourself. The person may not have your best interests in mind, or may be actively working against you, but you have the ability to contextualize their actions in relation to yourself, and it doesn’t have to be adversarial.

Easier said than done, though.

@Mr_Dimento 2 years ago

@michaellangan4450 this is a real philosophy moment here

@robertjay9415 2 years ago

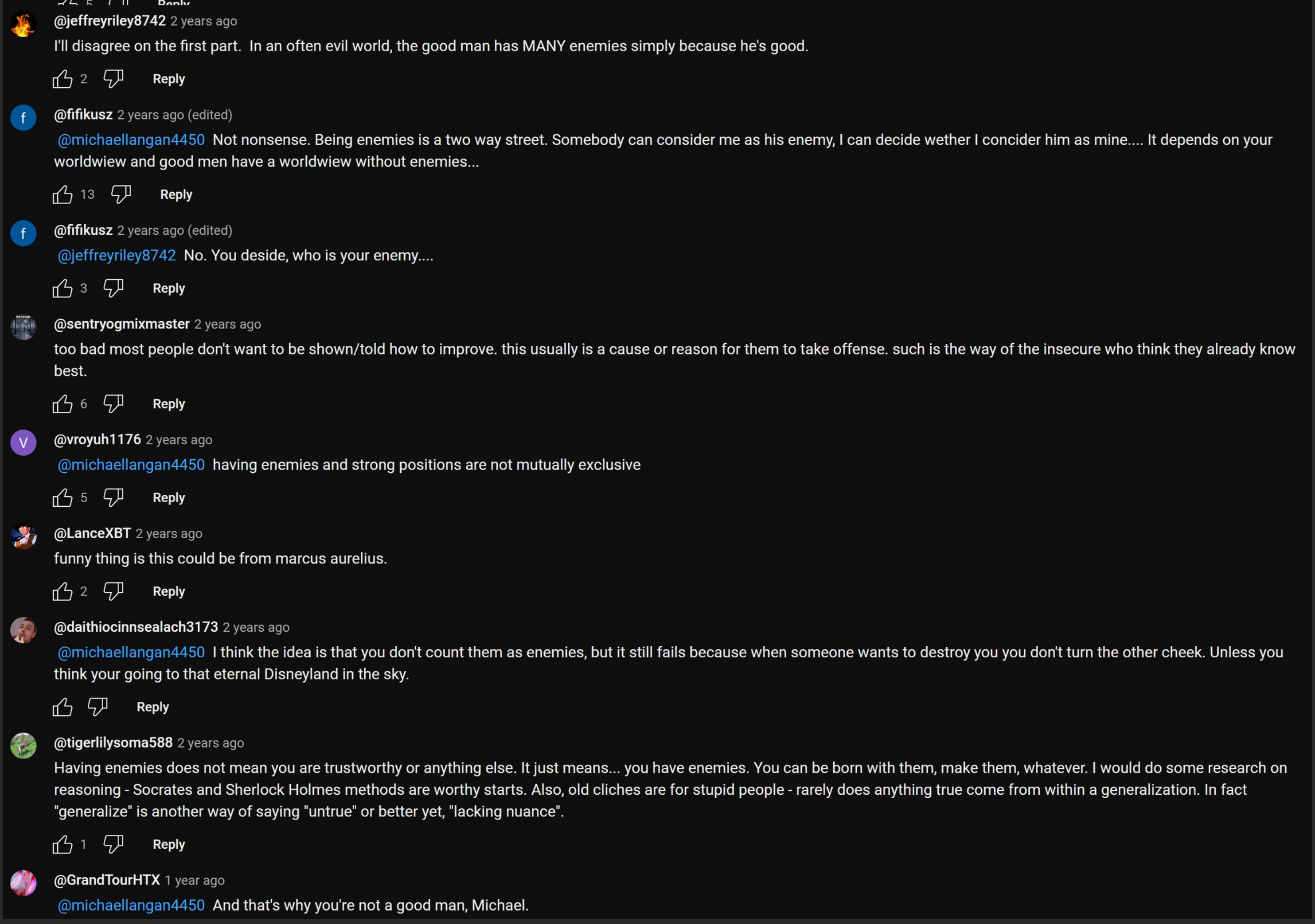
Back in high school I remember a saying if u have haters your doing something right

@RamManNo1 2 years ago

I see a lot of people completely miss the point. Just because someone considers you their enemy doesn’t mean you have to consider them YOUR enemy. Plato(Socrates? Whoever) also says that a bad man can do no harm to a good man. Now let that sink in…

@tumbleweedjones 2 years ago

Suffer no fools.



@jeffreyriley8742 2 years ago

I'll disagree on the first part. In an often evil world, the good man has MANY enemies simply because he's good.

@fifikusz 2 years ago (edited)

@michaellangan4450 Not nonsense. Being enemies is a two way street. Somebody can consider me as his enemy, I can decide wether I concider him as mine.... It depends on your worldwiew and good men have a worldwiew without enemies...

@fifikusz 2 years ago (edited)

@jeffreyriley8742 No. You deside, who is your enemy....

@sentryogmixmaster 2 years ago

too bad most people don't want to be shown/told how to improve. this usually is a cause or reason for them to take offense. such is the way of the insecure who think they already know best.

@vroyuh1176 2 years ago

@michaellangan4450 having enemies and strong positions are not mutually exclusive

@LanceXBT 2 years ago

funny thing is this could be from marcus aurelius.

@daithiocinnsealach3173 2 years ago

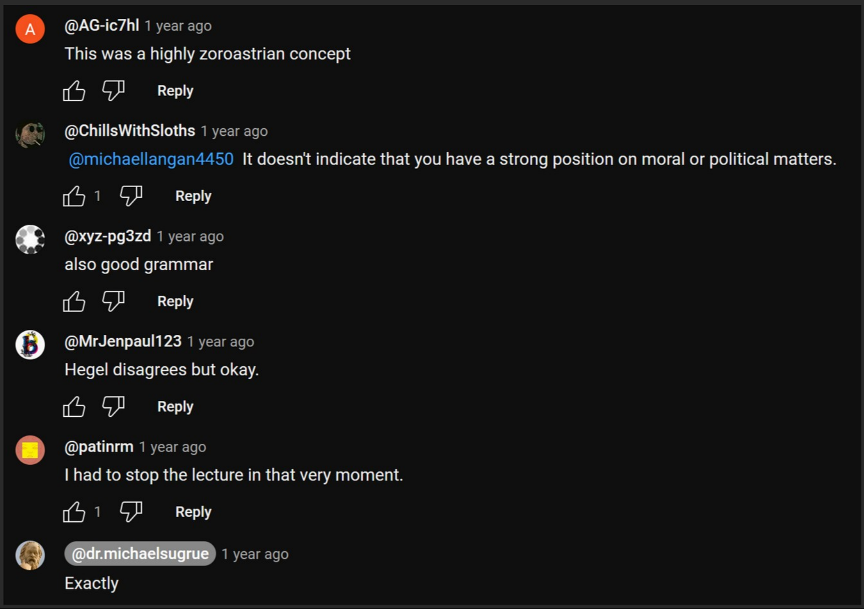
@michaellangan4450 I think the idea is that you don't count them as enemies, but it still fails because when someone wants to destroy you you don't turn the other cheek. Unless you think your going to that eternal Disneyland in the sky.

@tigerlilysoma588 2 years ago

Having enemies does not mean you are trustworthy or anything else. It just means... you have enemies. You can be born with them, make them, whatever. I would do some research on reasoning - Socrates and Sherlock Holmes methods are worthy starts. Also, old cliches are for stupid people - rarely does anything true come from within a generalization. In fact "generalize" is another way of saying "untrue" or better yet, "lacking nuance".

@GrandTourHTX 1 year ago

@michaellangan4450 And that's why you're not a good man, Michael.



@AG-ic7hl 1 year ago

This was a highly zoroastrian concept

@ChillsWithSloths 1 year ago

@michaellangan4450 It doesn't indicate that you have a strong position on moral or political matters.

@xyz-pg3zd 1 year ago

also good grammar

@MrJenpaul123 1 year ago

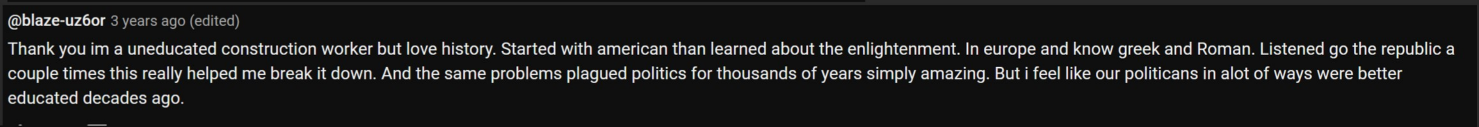
Hegel disagrees but okay.

@patinrm 1 year ago

I had to stop the lecture in that very moment.

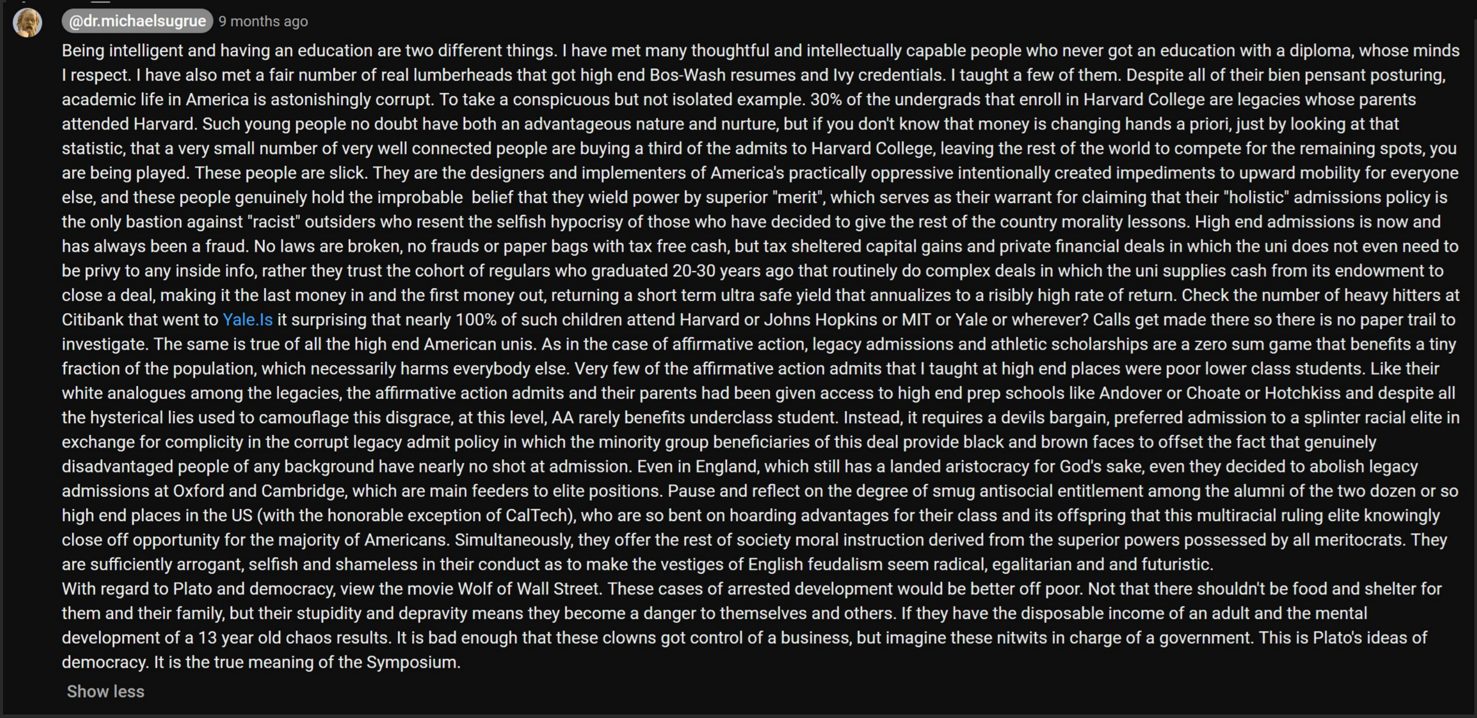
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Exactly



@blaze-uz6or 3 years ago (edited)

Thank you im a uneducated construction worker but love history. Started with american than learned about the enlightenment. In europe and know greek and Roman. Listened go the republic a couple times this really helped me break it down. And the same problems plagued politics for thousands of years simply amazing. But i feel like our politicans in alot of ways were better educated decades ago.

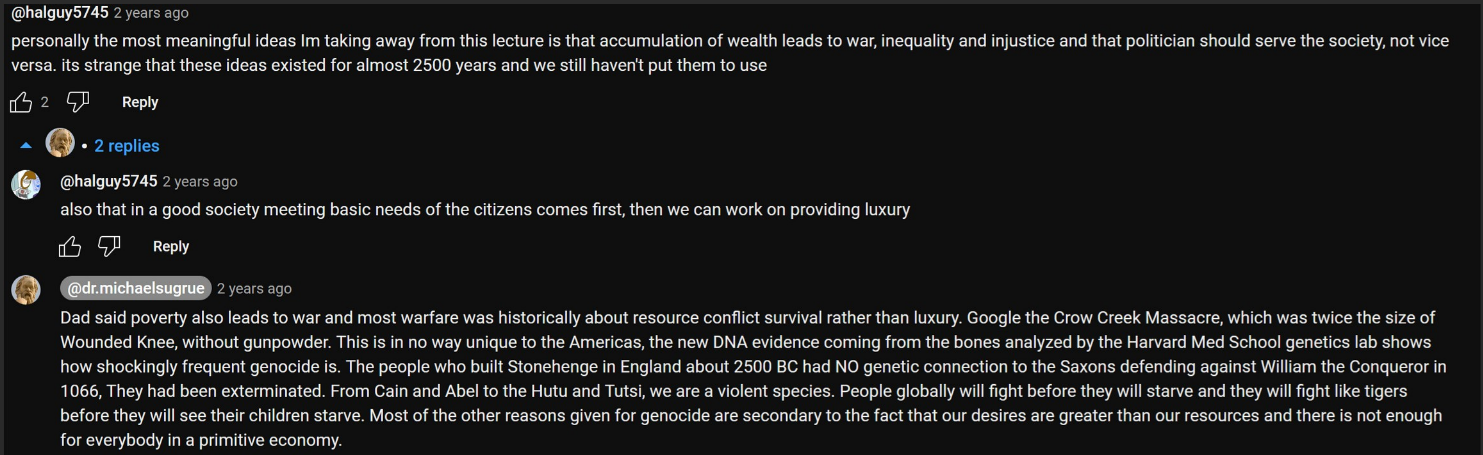


@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Being intelligent and having an education are two different things. I have met many thoughtful and intellectually capable people who never got an education with a diploma, whose minds I respect. I have also met a fair number of real lumberheads that got high end Bos-Wash resumes and Ivy credentials. I taught a few of them. Despite all of their bien pensant posturing, academic life in America is astonishingly corrupt. To take a conspicuous but not isolated example. 30% of the undergrads that enroll in Harvard College are legacies whose parents attended Harvard. Such young people no doubt have both an advantageous nature and nurture, but if you don't know that money is changing hands a priori, just by looking at that statistic, that a very small number of very well connected people are buying a third of the admits to Harvard College, leaving the rest of the world to compete for the remaining spots, you are being played. These people are slick. They are the designers and implementers of America's practically oppressive intentionally created impediments to upward mobility for everyone else, and these people genuinely hold the improbable belief that they wield power by superior "merit", which serves as their warrant for claiming that their "holistic" admissions policy is the only bastion against "racist" outsiders who resent the selfish hypocrisy of those who have decided to give the rest of the country morality lessons. High end admissions is now and has always been a fraud. No laws are broken, no frauds or paper bags with tax free cash, but tax sheltered capital gains and private financial deals in which the uni does not even need to be privy to any inside info, rather they trust the cohort of regulars who graduated 20-30 years ago that routinely do complex deals in which the uni supplies cash from its endowment to close a deal, making it the last money in and the first money out, returning a short term ultra safe yield that annualizes to a risibly high rate of return. Check the number of heavy hitters at Citibank that went to Yale.Is it surprising that nearly 100% of such children attend Harvard or Johns Hopkins or MIT or Yale or wherever? Calls get made there so there is no paper trail to investigate. The same is true of all the high end American unis. As in the case of affirmative action, legacy admissions and athletic scholarships are a zero sum game that benefits a tiny fraction of the population, which necessarily harms everybody else. Very few of the affirmative action admits that I taught at high end places were poor lower class students. Like their white analogues among the legacies, the affirmative action admits and their parents had been given access to high end prep schools like Andover or Choate or Hotchkiss and despite all the hysterical lies used to camouflage this disgrace, at this level, AA rarely benefits underclass student. Instead, it requires a devils bargain, preferred admission to a splinter racial elite in exchange for complicity in the corrupt legacy admit policy in which the minority group beneficiaries of this deal provide black and brown faces to offset the fact that genuinely disadvantaged people of any background have nearly no shot at admission. Even in England, which still has a landed aristocracy for God's sake, even they decided to abolish legacy admissions at Oxford and Cambridge, which are main feeders to elite positions. Pause and reflect on the degree of smug antisocial entitlement among the alumni of the two dozen or so high end places in the US (with the honorable exception of CalTech), who are so bent on hoarding advantages for their class and its offspring that this multiracial ruling elite knowingly close off opportunity for the majority of Americans. Simultaneously, they offer the rest of society moral instruction derived from the superior powers possessed by all meritocrats. They are sufficiently arrogant, selfish and shameless in their conduct as to make the vestiges of English feudalism seem radical, egalitarian and and futuristic.

With regard to Plato and democracy, view the movie Wolf of Wall Street. These cases of arrested development would be better off poor. Not that there shouldn't be food and shelter for them and their family, but their stupidity and depravity means they become a danger to themselves and others. If they have the disposable income of an adult and the mental development of a 13 year old chaos results. It is bad enough that these clowns got control of a business, but imagine these nitwits in charge of a government. This is Plato's ideas of democracy. It is the true meaning of the Symposium.

Great Minds - Part 1 - Plato's Republic II-V: Soul and City



@halguy5745 2 years ago

personally the most meaningful ideas Im taking away from this lecture is that accumulation of wealth leads to war, inequality and injustice and that politician should serve the society, not vice versa. its strange that these ideas existed for almost 2500 years and we still haven't put them to use

2 Reply

• 2 replies

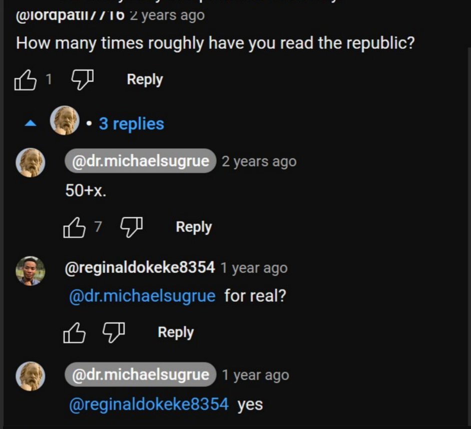
@halguy5745 2 years ago

also that in a good society meeting basic needs of the citizens comes first, then we can work on providing luxury

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said poverty also leads to war and most warfare was historically about resource conflict survival rather than luxury. Google the Crow Creek Massacre, which was twice the size of Wounded Knee, without gunpowder. This is in no way unique to the Americas, the new DNA evidence coming from the bones analyzed by the Harvard Med School genetics lab shows how shockingly frequent genocide is. The people who built Stonehenge in England about 2500 BC had NO genetic connection to the Saxons defending against William the Conqueror in 1066, They had been exterminated. From Cain and Abel to the Hutu and Tutsi, we are a violent species. People globally will fight before they will starve and they will fight like tigers before they will see their children starve. Most of the other reasons given for genocide are secondary to the fact that our desires are greater than our resources and there is not enough for everybody in a primitive economy.



@lordpatil7716 2 years ago

How many times roughly have you read the republic?

1 Reply

• 3 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

50+x.

7 Reply

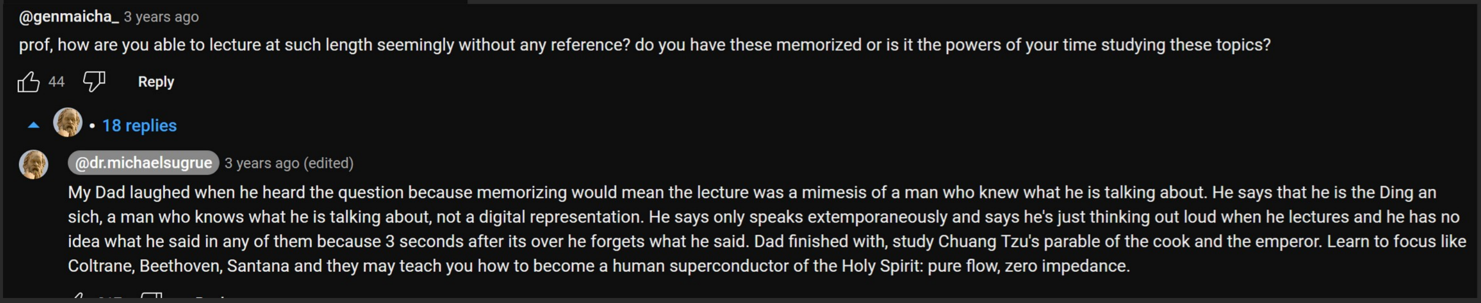
@reginaldokeke8354 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue for real?

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@reginaldokeke8354 yes



@genmaicha_ 3 years ago

prof, how are you able to lecture at such length seemingly without any reference? do you have these memorized or is it the powers of your time studying these topics?

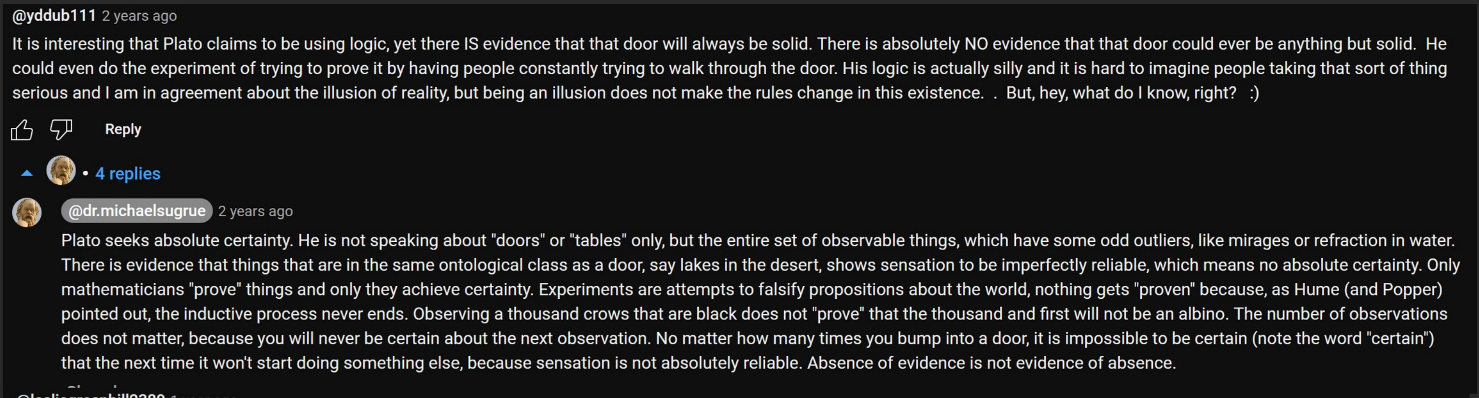
44 Reply

• 18 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago (edited)

My Dad laughed when he heard the question because memorizing would mean the lecture was a mimesis of a man who knew what he is talking about. He says that he is the Ding an sich, a man who knows what he is talking about, not a digital representation. He says only speaks extemporaneously and says he's just thinking out loud when he lectures and he has no idea what he said in any of them because 3 seconds after its over he forgets what he said. Dad finished with, study Chuang Tzu's parable of the cook and the emperor. Learn to focus like Coltrane, Beethoven, Santana and they may teach you how to become a human superconductor of the Holy Spirit: pure flow, zero impedance.

Plato's Republic VI-X: The Architecture of Reality

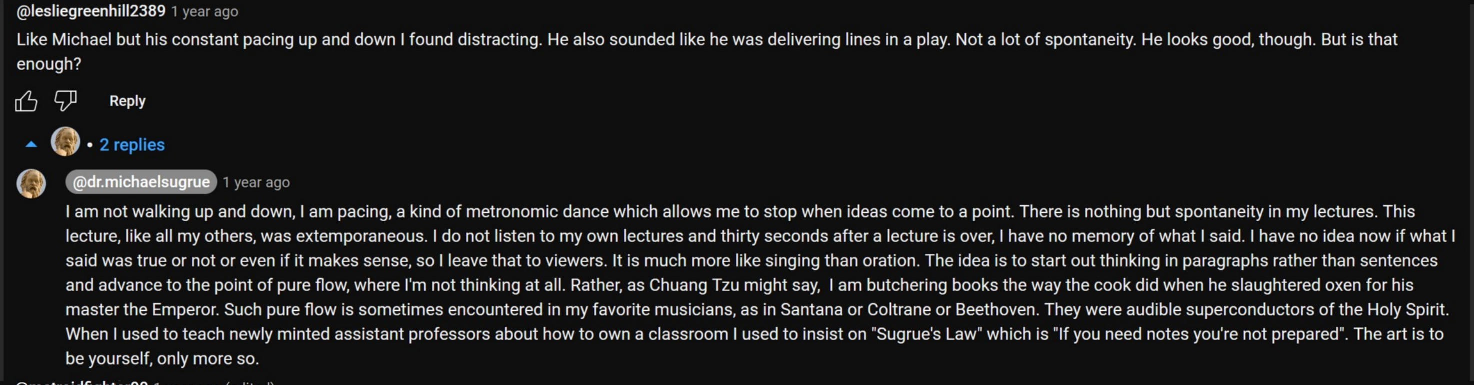


@yddub111 2 years ago

It is interesting that Plato claims to be using logic, yet there IS evidence that that door will always be solid. There is absolutely NO evidence that that door could ever be anything but solid. He could even do the experiment of trying to prove it by having people constantly trying to walk through the door. His logic is actually silly and it is hard to imagine people taking that sort of thing serious and I am in agreement about the illusion of reality, but being an illusion does not make the rules change in this existence. . But, hey, what do I know, right?   :)

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Plato seeks absolute certainty. He is not speaking about "doors" or "tables" only, but the entire set of observable things, which have some odd outliers, like mirages or refraction in water. There is evidence that things that are in the same ontological class as a door, say lakes in the desert, shows sensation to be imperfectly reliable, which means no absolute certainty. Only mathematicians "prove" things and only they achieve certainty. Experiments are attempts to falsify propositions about the world, nothing gets "proven" because, as Hume (and Popper) pointed out, the inductive process never ends. Observing a thousand crows that are black does not "prove" that the thousand and first will not be an albino. The number of observations does not matter, because you will never be certain about the next observation. No matter how many times you bump into a door, it is impossible to be certain (note the word "certain") that the next time it won't start doing something else, because sensation is not absolutely reliable. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence.

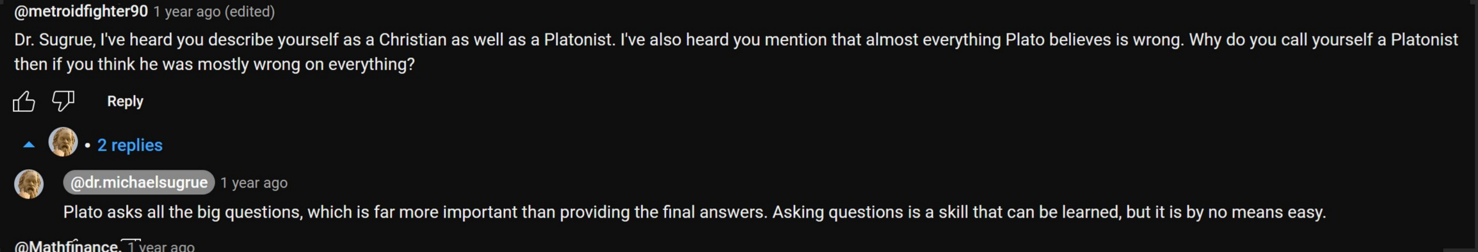


@lesliegreenhill2389 1 year ago

Like Michael but his constant pacing up and down I found distracting. He also sounded like he was delivering lines in a play. Not a lot of spontaneity. He looks good, though. But is that enough?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I am not walking up and down, I am pacing, a kind of metronomic dance which allows me to stop when ideas come to a point. There is nothing but spontaneity in my lectures. This lecture, like all my others, was extemporaneous. I do not listen to my own lectures and thirty seconds after a lecture is over, I have no memory of what I said. I have no idea now if what I said was true or not or even if it makes sense, so I leave that to viewers. It is much more like singing than oration. The idea is to start out thinking in paragraphs rather than sentences and advance to the point of pure flow, where I'm not thinking at all. Rather, as Chuang Tzu might say, I am butchering books the way the cook did when he slaughtered oxen for his master the Emperor. Such pure flow is sometimes encountered in my favorite musicians, as in Santana or Coltrane or Beethoven. They were audible superconductors of the Holy Spirit. When I used to teach newly minted assistant professors about how to own a classroom I used to insist on "Sugrue's Law" which is "If you need notes you're not prepared". The art is to be yourself, only more so.

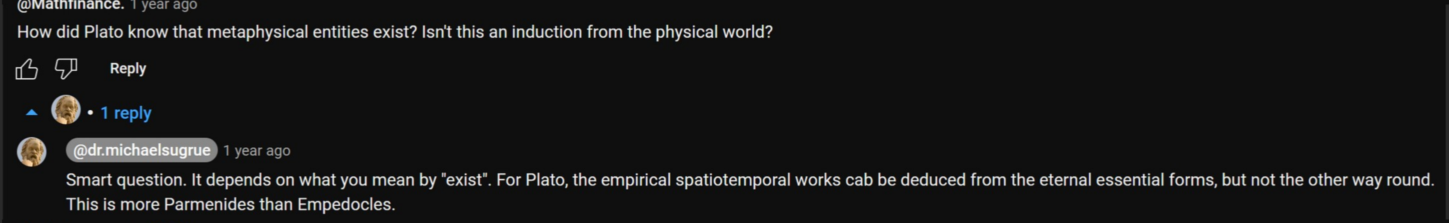


@metroidfighter90 1 year ago (edited)

Dr. Sugrue, I've heard you describe yourself as a Christian as well as a Platonist. I've also heard you mention that almost everything Plato believes is wrong. Why do you call yourself a Platonist then if you think he was mostly wrong on everything?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Plato asks all the big questions, which is far more important than providing the final answers. Asking questions is a skill that can be learned, but it is by no means easy.

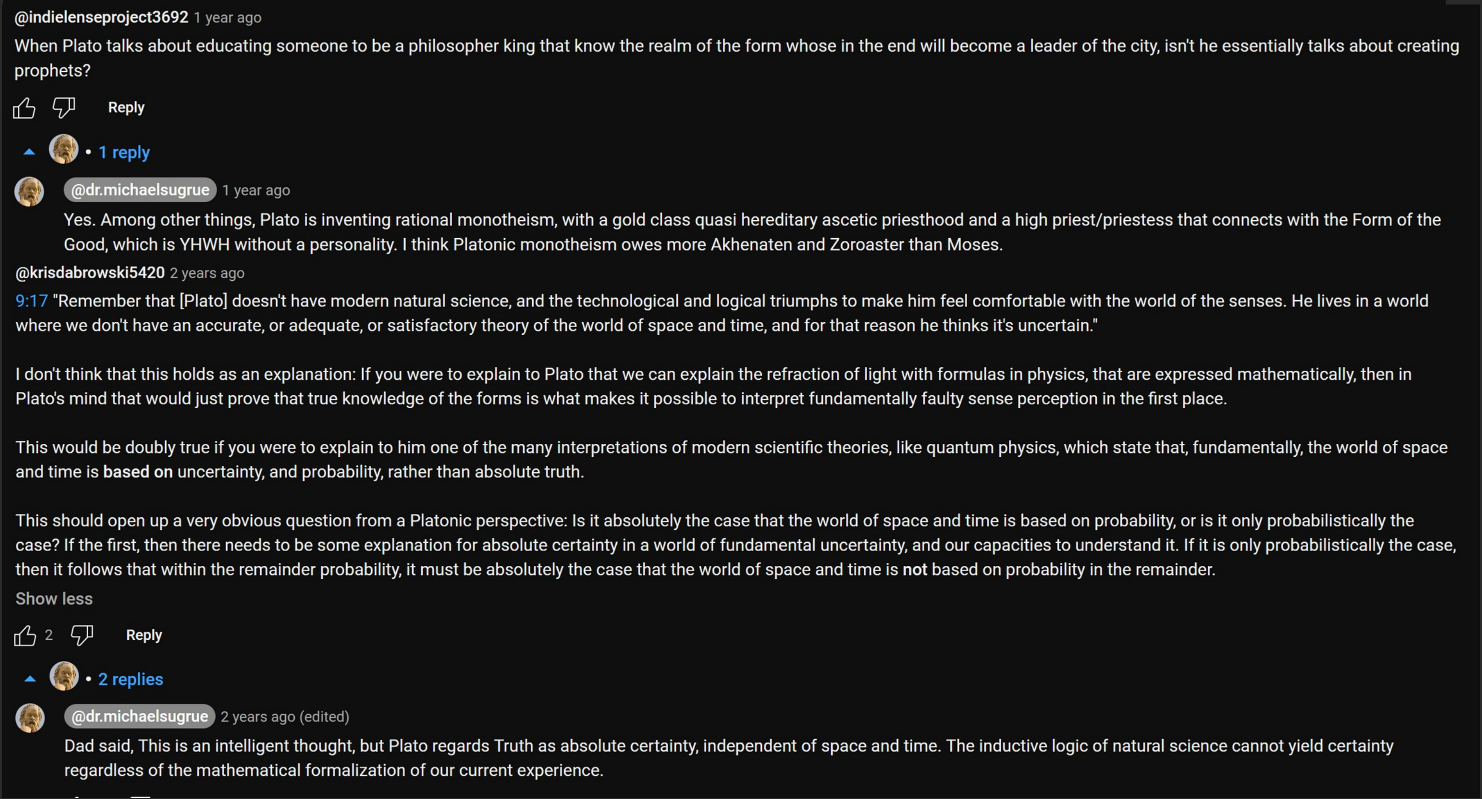


@Mathfinance. 1 year ago

How did Plato know that metaphysical entities exist? Isn't this an induction from the physical world?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Smart question. It depends on what you mean by "exist". For Plato, the empirical spatiotemporal works cab be deduced from the eternal essential forms, but not the other way round. This is more Parmenides than Empedocles.



@indielenseproject3692 1 year ago

When Plato talks about educating someone to be a philosopher king that know the realm of the form whose in the end will become a leader of the city, isn't he essentially talks about creating prophets?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes. Among other things, Plato is inventing rational monotheism, with a gold class quasi hereditary ascetic priesthood and a high priest/priestess that connects with the Form of the Good, which is YHWH without a personality. I think Platonic monotheism owes more Akhenaten and Zoroaster than Moses.

@krisdabrowski5420 2 years ago

9:17 "Remember that [Plato] doesn't have modern natural science, and the technological and logical triumphs to make him feel comfortable with the world of the senses. He lives in a world where we don't have an accurate, or adequate, or satisfactory theory of the world of space and time, and for that reason he thinks it's uncertain."

I don't think that this holds as an explanation: If you were to explain to Plato that we can explain the refraction of light with formulas in physics, that are expressed mathematically, then in Plato's mind that would just prove that true knowledge of the forms is what makes it possible to interpret fundamentally faulty sense perception in the first place.

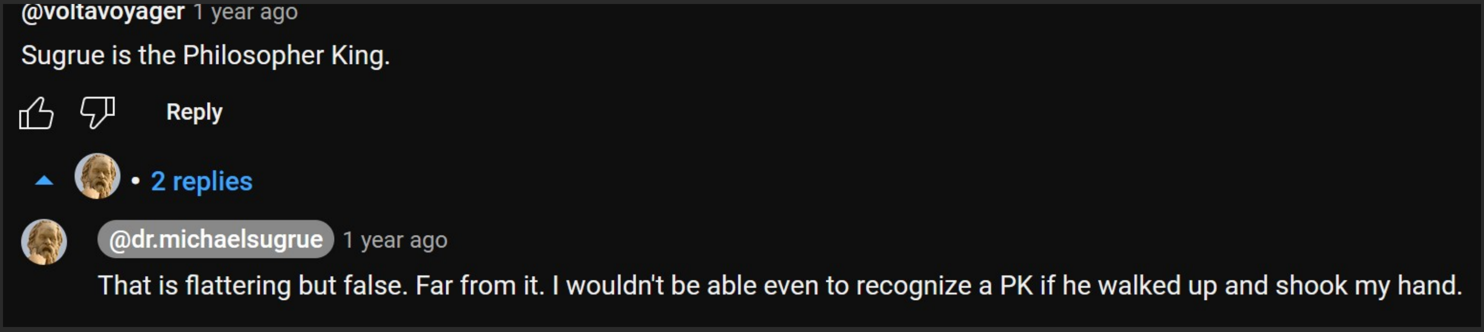
This would be doubly true if you were to explain to him one of the many interpretations of modern scientific theories, like quantum physics, which state that, fundamentally, the world of space and time is **based on** uncertainty, and probability, rather than absolute truth.

This should open up a very obvious question from a Platonic perspective: Is it absolutely the case that the world of space and time is based on probability, or is it only probabilistically the case? If the first, then there needs to be some explanation for absolute certainty in a world of fundamental uncertainty, and our capacities to understand it. If it is only probabilistically the case, then it follows that within the remainder probability, it must be absolutely the case that the world of space and time is **not** based on probability in the remainder.

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, This is an intelligent thought, but Plato regards Truth as absolute certainty, independent of space and time. The inductive logic of natural science cannot yield certainty regardless of the mathematical formalization of our current experience.



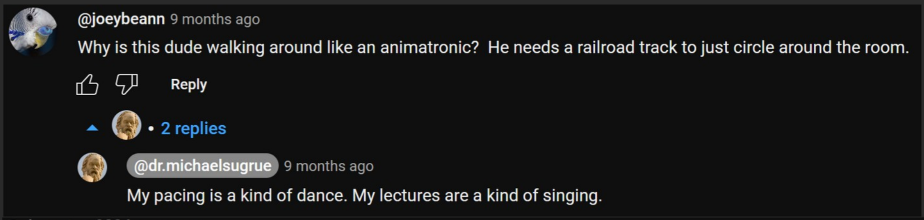
@voltavoyager 1 year ago

Sugrue is the Philosopher King.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

That is flattering but false. Far from it. I wouldn't be able even to recognize a PK if he walked up and shook my hand.

Great Minds - Part 4 - Marx and the Problem of Alienation and Ideology

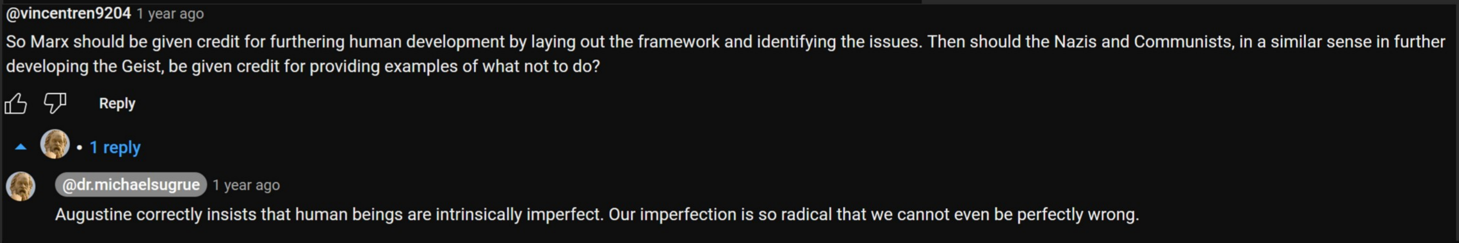


@joeybeann 9 months ago

Why is this dude walking around like an animatronic? He needs a railroad track to just circle around the room.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

My pacing is a kind of dance. My lectures are a kind of singing.

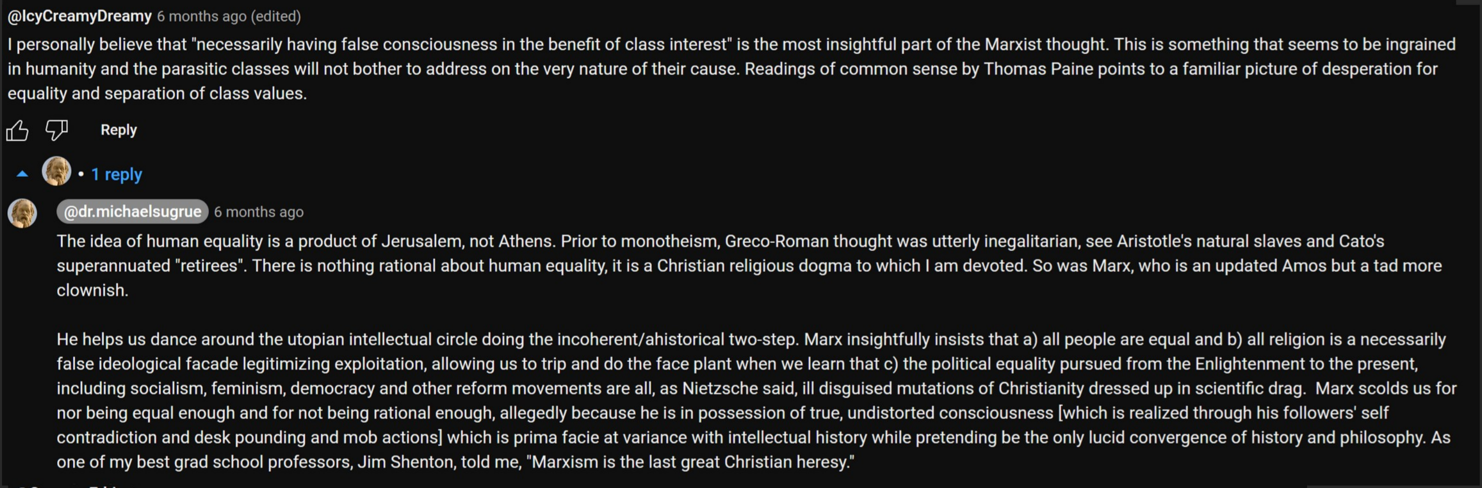


@vincentren9204 1 year ago

So Marx should be given credit for furthering human development by laying out the framework and identifying the issues. Then should the Nazis and Communists, in a similar sense in further developing the Geist, be given credit for providing examples of what not to do?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Augustine correctly insists that human beings are intrinsically imperfect. Our imperfection is so radical that we cannot even be perfectly wrong.



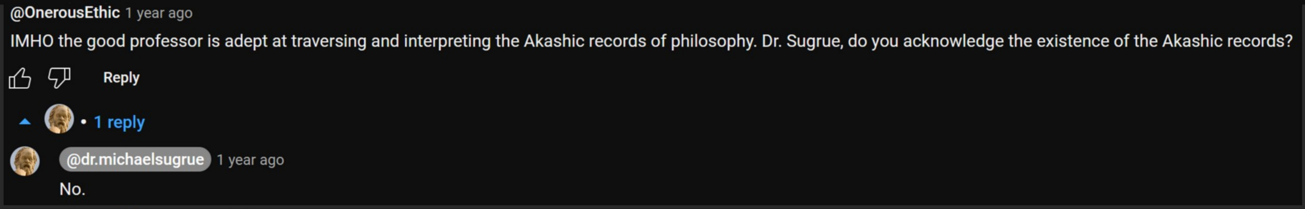
@IcyCreamyDreamy 6 months ago (edited)

I personally believe that "necessarily having false consciousness in the benefit of class interest" is the most insightful part of the Marxist thought. This is something that seems to be ingrained in humanity and the parasitic classes will not bother to address on the very nature of their cause. Readings of common sense by Thomas Paine points to a familiar picture of desperation for equality and separation of class values.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

The idea of human equality is a product of Jerusalem, not Athens. Prior to monotheism, Greco-Roman thought was utterly inegalitarian, see Aristotle's natural slaves and Cato's superannuated "retirees". There is nothing rational about human equality, it is a Christian religious dogma to which I am devoted. So was Marx, who is an updated Amos but a tad more clownish.

He helps us dance around the utopian intellectual circle doing the incoherent/ahistorical two-step. Marx insightfully insists that a) all people are equal and b) all religion is a necessarily false ideological facade legitimizing exploitation, allowing us to trip and do the face plant when we learn that c) the political equality pursued from the Enlightenment to the present, including socialism, feminism, democracy and other reform movements are all, as Nietzsche said, ill disguised mutations of Christianity dressed up in scientific drag. Marx scolds us for nor being equal enough and for not being rational enough, allegedly because he is in possession of true, undistorted consciousness [which is realized through his followers' self contradiction and desk pounding and mob actions] which is prima facie at variance with intellectual history while pretending be the only lucid convergence of history and philosophy. As one of my best grad school professors, Jim Shenton, told me, "Marxism is the last great Christian heresy."

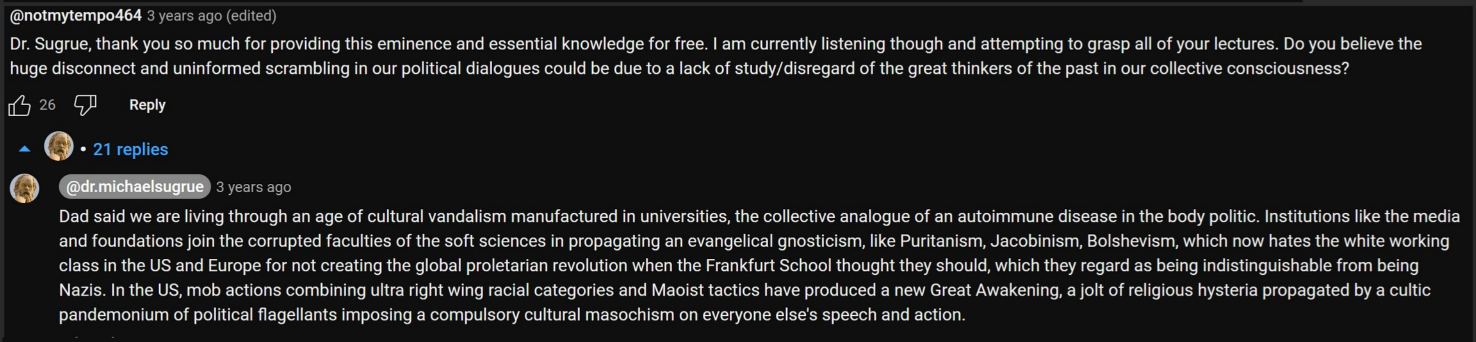


@OnerousEthic 1 year ago

IMHO the good professor is adept at traversing and interpreting the Akashic records of philosophy. Dr. Sugrue, do you acknowledge the existence of the Akashic records?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

No.

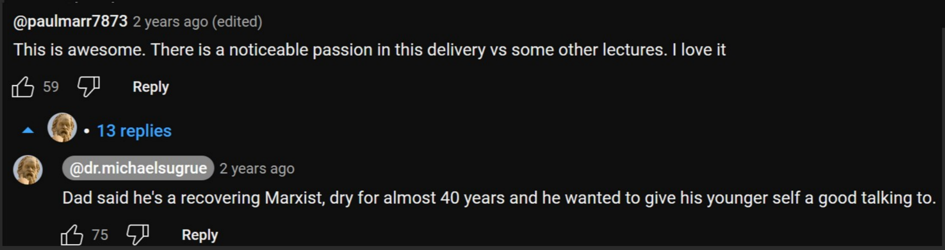


@notmytempo464 3 years ago (edited)

Dr. Sugrue, thank you so much for providing this eminence and essential knowledge for free. I am currently listening though and attempting to grasp all of your lectures. Do you believe the huge disconnect and uninformed scrambling in our political dialogues could be due to a lack of study/disregard of the great thinkers of the past in our collective consciousness?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

Dad said we are living through an age of cultural vandalism manufactured in universities, the collective analogue of an autoimmune disease in the body politic. Institutions like the media and foundations join the corrupted faculties of the soft sciences in propagating an evangelical gnosticism, like Puritanism, Jacobinism, Bolshevism, which now hates the white working class in the US and Europe for not creating the global proletarian revolution when the Frankfurt School thought they should, which they regard as being indistinguishable from being Nazis. In the US, mob actions combining ultra right wing racial categories and Maoist tactics have produced a new Great Awakening, a jolt of religious hysteria propagated by a cultic pandemonium of political flagellants imposing a compulsory cultural masochism on everyone else's speech and action.



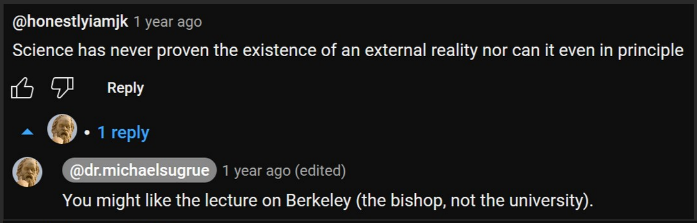
@paulmarr7873 2 years ago (edited)

This is awesome. There is a noticeable passion in this delivery vs some other lectures. I love it

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he's a recovering Marxist, dry for almost 40 years and he wanted to give his younger self a good talking to.

Hegel: The Phenomenology of Geist

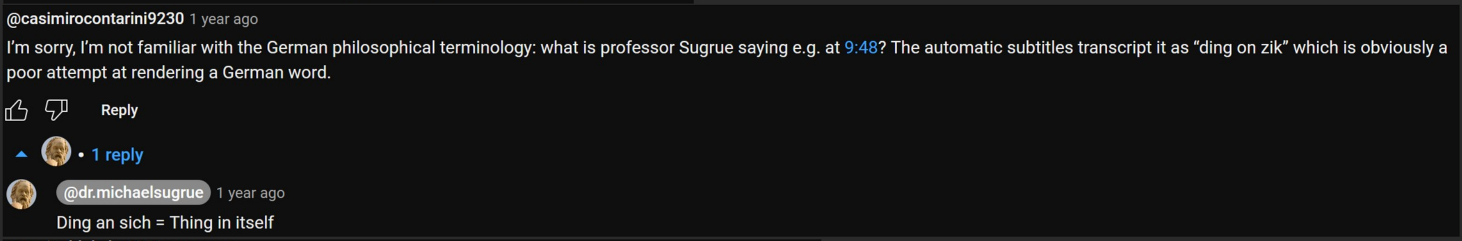


@honestlyiamjk 1 year ago

Science has never proven the existence of an external reality nor can it even in principle

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

You might like the lecture on Berkeley (the bishop, not the university).

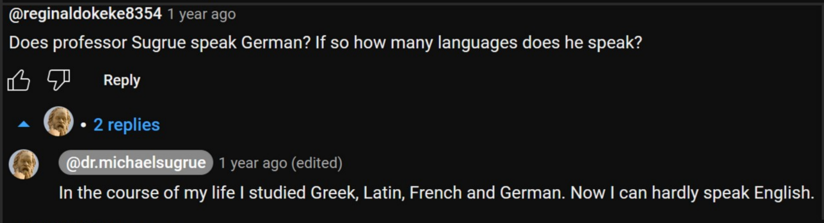


@casimirocontarini9230 1 year ago

I'm sorry, I'm not familiar with the German philosophical terminology: what is professor Sugrue saying e.g. at 9:48? The automatic subtitles transcript it as "ding on zik" which is obviously a poor attempt at rendering a German word.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Ding an sich = Thing in itself

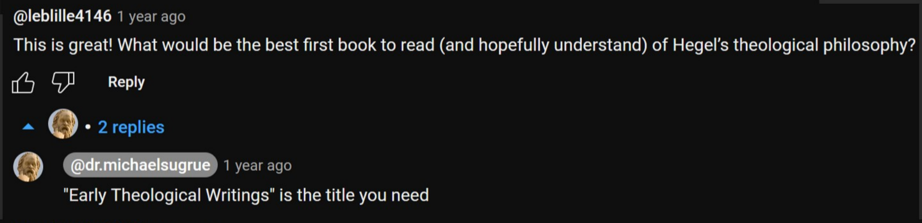


@reginaldokeke8354 1 year ago

Does professor Sugrue speak German? If so how many languages does he speak?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

In the course of my life I studied Greek, Latin, French and German. Now I can hardly speak English.

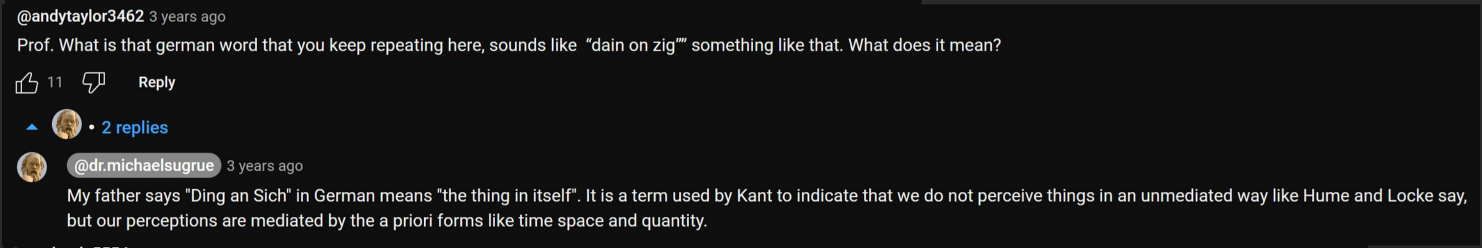


@leblille4146 1 year ago

This is great! What would be the best first book to read (and hopefully understand) of Hegel's theological philosophy?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

"Early Theological Writings" is the title you need

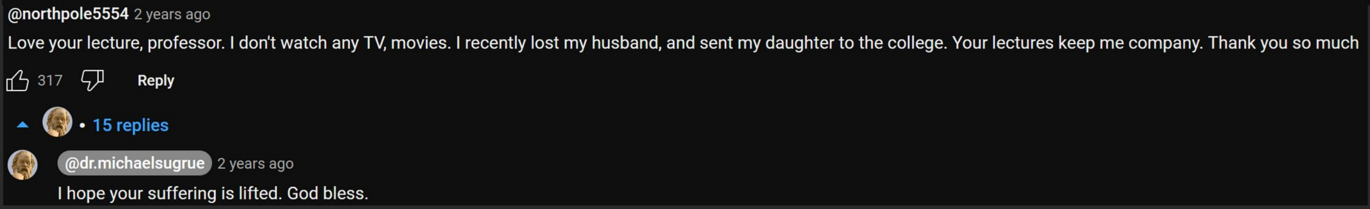


@andytaylor3462 3 years ago

Prof. What is that german word that you keep repeating here, sounds like "dain on zig"" something like that. What does it mean?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

My father says "Ding an Sich" in German means "the thing in itself". It is a term used by Kant to indicate that we do not perceive things in an unmediated way like Hume and Locke say, but our perceptions are mediated by the a priori forms like time space and quantity.



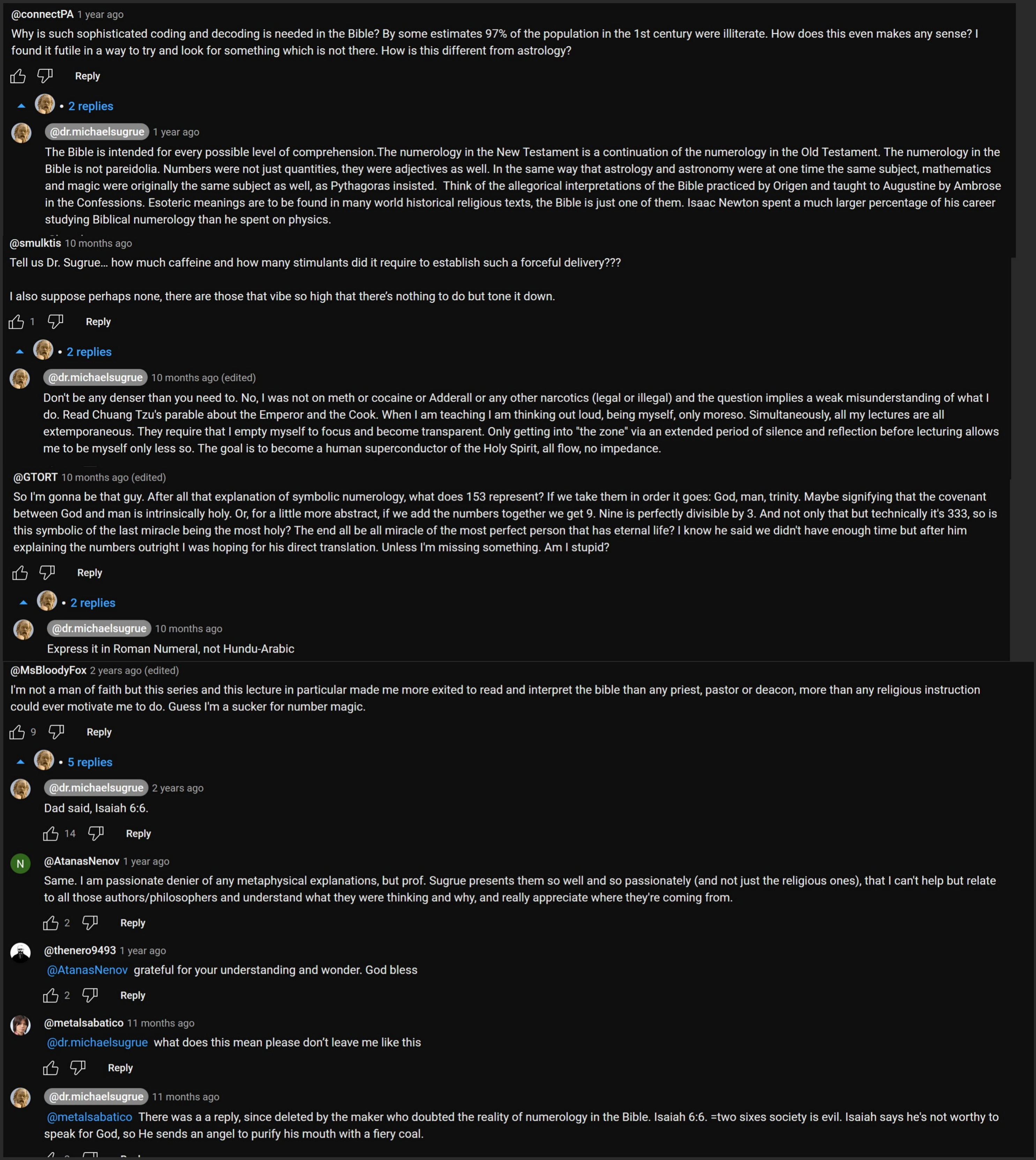
@northpole5554 2 years ago

Love your lecture, professor. I don't watch any TV, movies. I recently lost my husband, and sent my daughter to the college. Your lectures keep me company. Thank you so much

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

I hope your suffering is lifted. God bless.

John: The Unbroken Net of Scripture



@connectPA 1 year ago

Why is such sophisticated coding and decoding is needed in the Bible? By some estimates 97% of the population in the 1st century were illiterate. How does this even makes any sense? I found it futile in a way to try and look for something which is not there. How is this different from astrology?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The Bible is intended for every possible level of comprehension.The numerology in the New Testament is a continuation of the numerology in the Old Testament. The numerology in the Bible is not pareidolia. Numbers were not just quantities, they were adjectives as well. In the same way that astrology and astronomy were at one time the same subject, mathematics and magic were originally the same subject as well, as Pythagoras insisted. Think of the allegorical interpretations of the Bible practiced by Origen and taught to Augustine by Ambrose in the Confessions. Esoteric meanings are to be found in many world historical religious texts, the Bible is just one of them. Isaac Newton spent a much larger percentage of his career studying Biblical numerology than he spent on physics.

@smulktis 10 months ago

Tell us Dr. Sugrue… how much caffeine and how many stimulants did it require to establish such a forceful delivery???

I also suppose perhaps none, there are those that vibe so high that there's nothing to do but tone it down.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Don't be any denser than you need to. No, I was not on meth or cocaine or Adderall or any other narcotics (legal or illegal) and the question implies a weak misunderstanding of what I do. Read Chuang Tzu's parable about the Emperor and the Cook. When I am teaching I am thinking out loud, being myself, only moreso. Simultaneously, all my lectures are all extemporaneous. They require that I empty myself to focus and become transparent. Only getting into "the zone" via an extended period of silence and reflection before lecturing allows me to be myself only less so. The goal is to become a human superconductor of the Holy Spirit, all flow, no impedance.

@GTORT 10 months ago (edited)

So I'm gonna be that guy. After all that explanation of symbolic numerology, what does 153 represent? If we take them in order it goes: God, man, trinity. Maybe signifying that the covenant between God and man is intrinsically holy. Or, for a little more abstract, if we add the numbers together we get 9. Nine is perfectly divisible by 3. And not only that but technically it's 333, so is this symbolic of the last miracle being the most holy? The end all be all miracle of the most perfect person that has eternal life? I know he said we didn't have enough time but after him explaining the numbers outright I was hoping for his direct translation. Unless I'm missing something. Am I stupid?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Express it in Roman Numeral, not Hundu-Arabic

@MsBloodyFox 2 years ago (edited)

I'm not a man of faith but this series and this lecture in particular made me more exited to read and interpret the bible than any priest, pastor or deacon, more than any religious instruction could ever motivate me to do. Guess I'm a sucker for number magic.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Isaiah 6:6.

@AtanasNenov 1 year ago

Same. I am passionate denier of any metaphysical explanations, but prof. Sugrue presents them so well and so passionately (and not just the religious ones), that I can't help but relate to all those authors/philosophers and understand what they were thinking and why, and really appreciate where they're coming from.

@thenero9493 1 year ago

@AtanasNenov grateful for your understanding and wonder. God bless

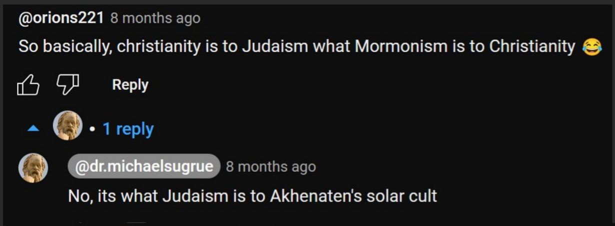
@metalsabatico 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue what does this mean please don't leave me like this

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

@metalsabatico There was a a reply, since deleted by the maker who doubted the reality of numerology in the Bible. Isaiah 6:6. =two sixes society is evil. Isaiah says he's not worthy to speak for God, so He sends an angel to purify his mouth with a fiery coal.

The Pauline Tradition

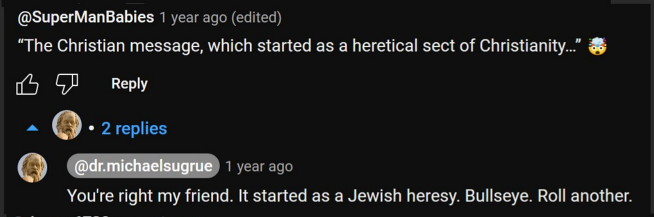


@orions221 8 months ago

So basically, christianity is to Judaism what Mormonism is to Christianity 😂

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

No, its what Judaism is to Akhenaten's solar cult

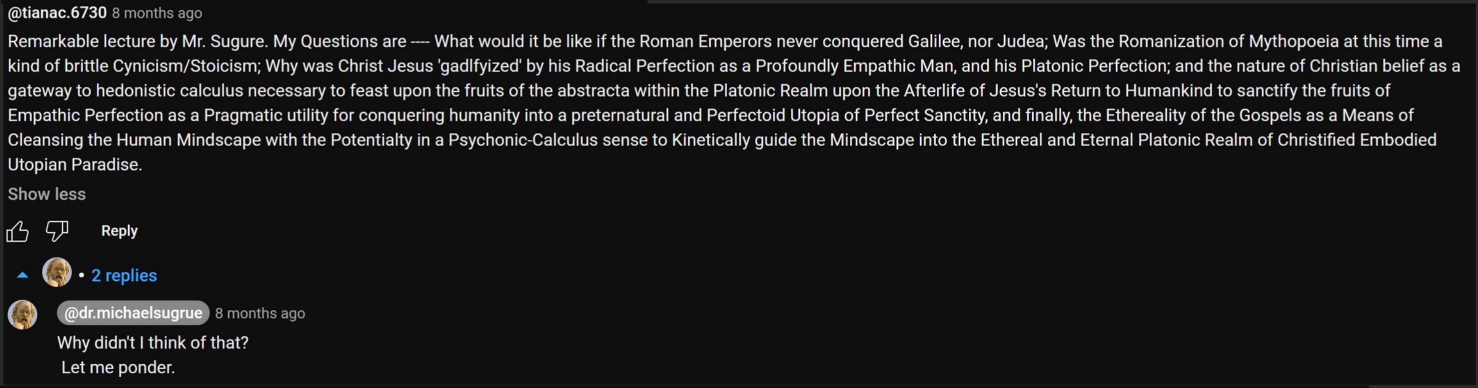


@SuperManBabies 1 year ago (edited)

“The Christian message, which started as a heretical sect of Christianity…” 🤯

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You're right my friend. It started as a Jewish heresy. Bullseye. Roll another.

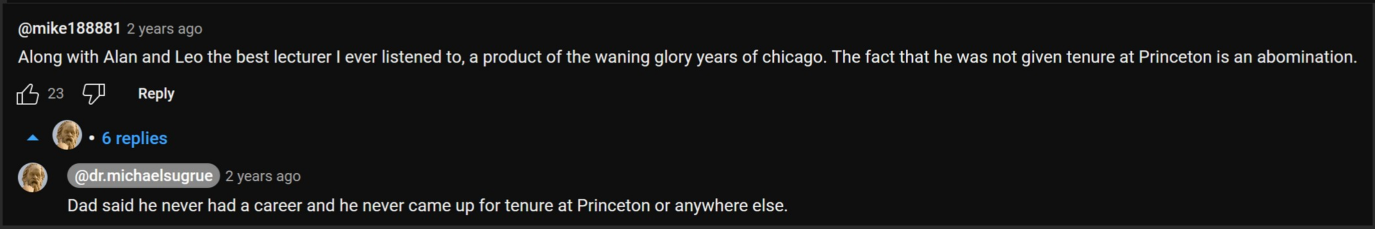


@tianac.6730 8 months ago

Remarkable lecture by Mr. Sugure. My Questions are ---- What would it be like if the Roman Emperors never conquered Galilee, nor Judea; Was the Romanization of Mythopoeia at this time a kind of brittle Cynicism/Stoicism; Why was Christ Jesus 'gadlfyized' by his Radical Perfection as a Profoundly Empathic Man, and his Platonic Perfection; and the nature of Christian belief as a gateway to hedonistic calculus necessary to feast upon the fruits of the abstracta within the Platonic Realm upon the Afterlife of Jesus's Return to Humankind to sanctify the fruits of Empathic Perfection as a Pragmatic utility for conquering humanity into a preternatural and Perfectoid Utopia of Perfect Sanctity, and finally, the Ethereality of the Gospels as a Means of Cleansing the Human Mindscape with the Potentialty in a Psychonic-Calculus sense to Kinetically guide the Mindscape into the Ethereal and Eternal Platonic Realm of Christified Embodied Utopian Paradise.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Why didn't I think of that?
Let me ponder.



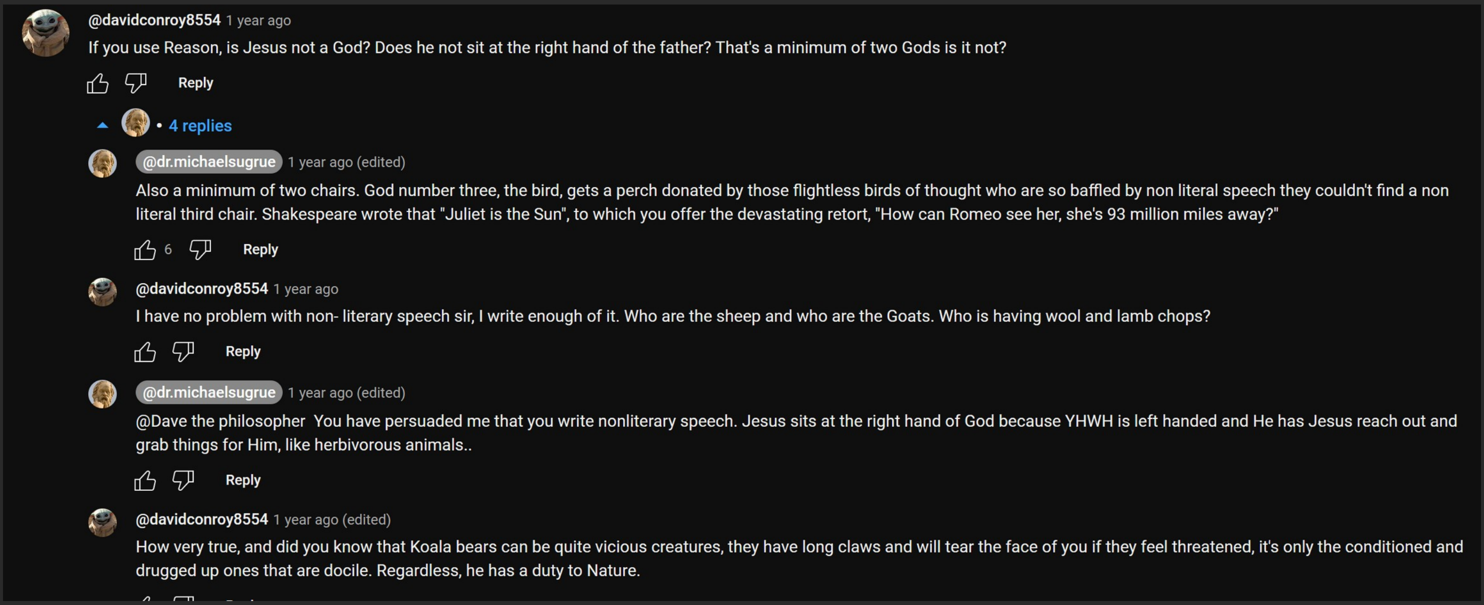
@mike188881 2 years ago

Along with Alan and Leo the best lecturer I ever listened to, a product of the waning glory years of chicago. The fact that he was not given tenure at Princeton is an abomination.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he never had a career and he never came up for tenure at Princeton or anywhere else.

Augustine and the Christian Self



@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

If you use Reason, is Jesus not a God? Does he not sit at the right hand of the father? That's a minimum of two Gods is it not?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Also a minimum of two chairs. God number three, the bird, gets a perch donated by those flightless birds of thought who are so baffled by non literal speech they couldn't find a non literal third chair. Shakespeare wrote that "Juliet is the Sun", to which you offer the devastating retort, "How can Romeo see her, she's 93 million miles away?"

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

I have no problem with non- literary speech sir, I write enough of it. Who are the sheep and who are the Goats. Who is having wool and lamb chops?

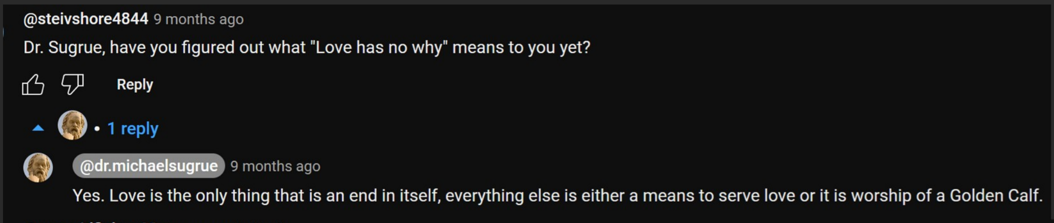
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

@Dave the philosopher You have persuaded me that you write nonliterary speech. Jesus sits at the right hand of God because YHWH is left handed and He has Jesus reach out and grab things for Him, like herbivorous animals..

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago (edited)

How very true, and did you know that Koala bears can be quite vicious creatures, they have long claws and will tear the face of you if they feel threatened, it's only the conditioned and drugged up ones that are docile. Regardless, he has a duty to Nature.

Meister Eckhart: From Whom God Hid Nothing

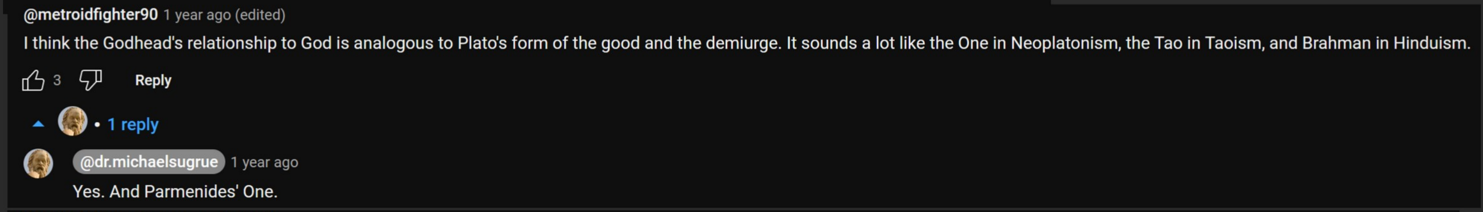


@steivshore4844 9 months ago

Dr. Sugrue, have you figured out what "Love has no why" means to you yet?

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Yes. Love is the only thing that is an end in itself, everything else is either a means to serve love or it is worship of a Golden Calf.

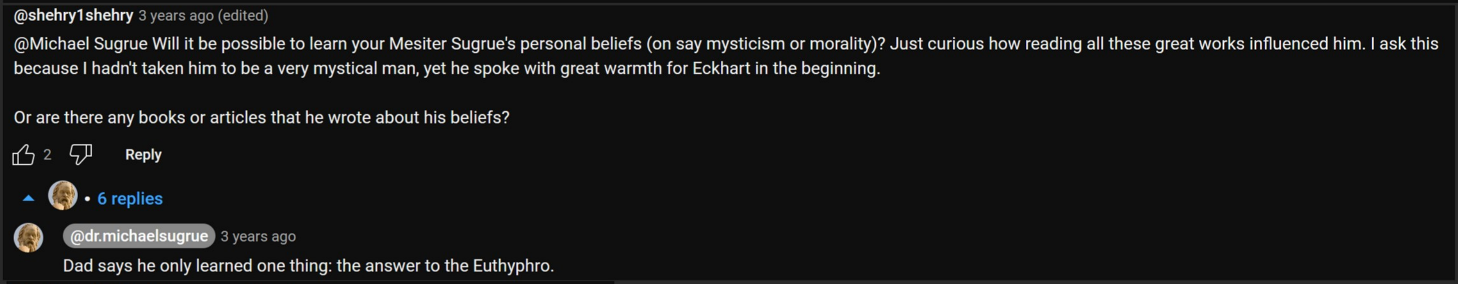


@metroidfighter90 1 year ago (edited)

I think the Godhead's relationship to God is analogous to Plato's form of the good and the demiurge. It sounds a lot like the One in Neoplatonism, the Tao in Taoism, and Brahman in Hinduism.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes. And Parmenides' One.



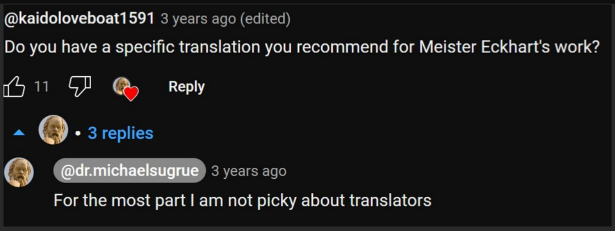
@shehry1shehry 3 years ago (edited)

@Michael Sugrue Will it be possible to learn your Mesiter Sugrue's personal beliefs (on say mysticism or morality)? Just curious how reading all these great works influenced him. I ask this because I hadn't taken him to be a very mystical man, yet he spoke with great warmth for Eckhart in the beginning.

Or are there any books or articles that he wrote about his beliefs?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

Dad says he only learned one thing: the answer to the Euthyphro.



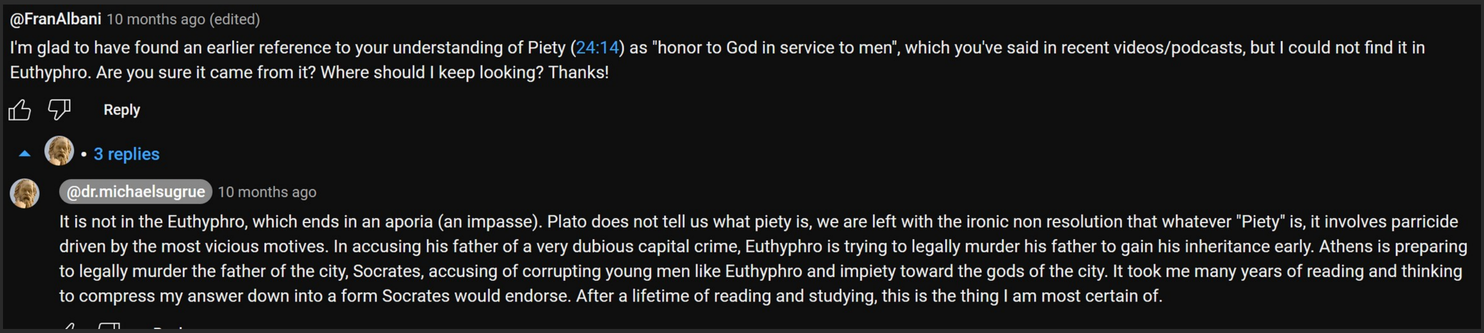
@kaidoloveboat1591 3 years ago (edited)

Do you have a specific translation you recommend for Meister Eckhart's work?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

For the most part I am not picky about translators

Utopia: Between Heaven and Earth



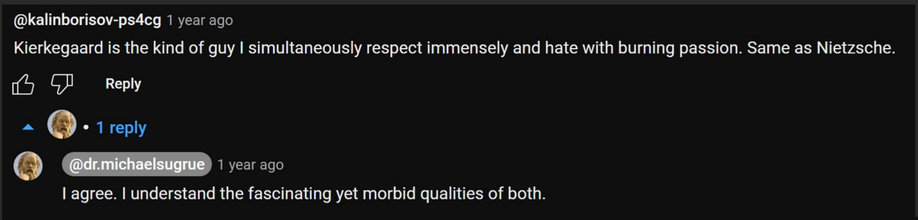
@FranAlbani 10 months ago (edited)

I'm glad to have found an earlier reference to your understanding of Piety (24:14) as "honor to God in service to men", which you've said in recent videos/podcasts, but I could not find it in Euthyphro. Are you sure it came from it? Where should I keep looking? Thanks!

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

It is not in the Euthyphro, which ends in an aporia (an impasse). Plato does not tell us what piety is, we are left with the ironic non resolution that whatever "Piety" is, it involves parricide driven by the most vicious motives. In accusing his father of a very dubious capital crime, Euthyphro is trying to legally murder his father to gain his inheritance early. Athens is preparing to legally murder the father of the city, Socrates, accusing of corrupting young men like Euthyphro and impiety toward the gods of the city. It took me many years of reading and thinking to compress my answer down into a form Socrates would endorse. After a lifetime of reading and studying, this is the thing I am most certain of.

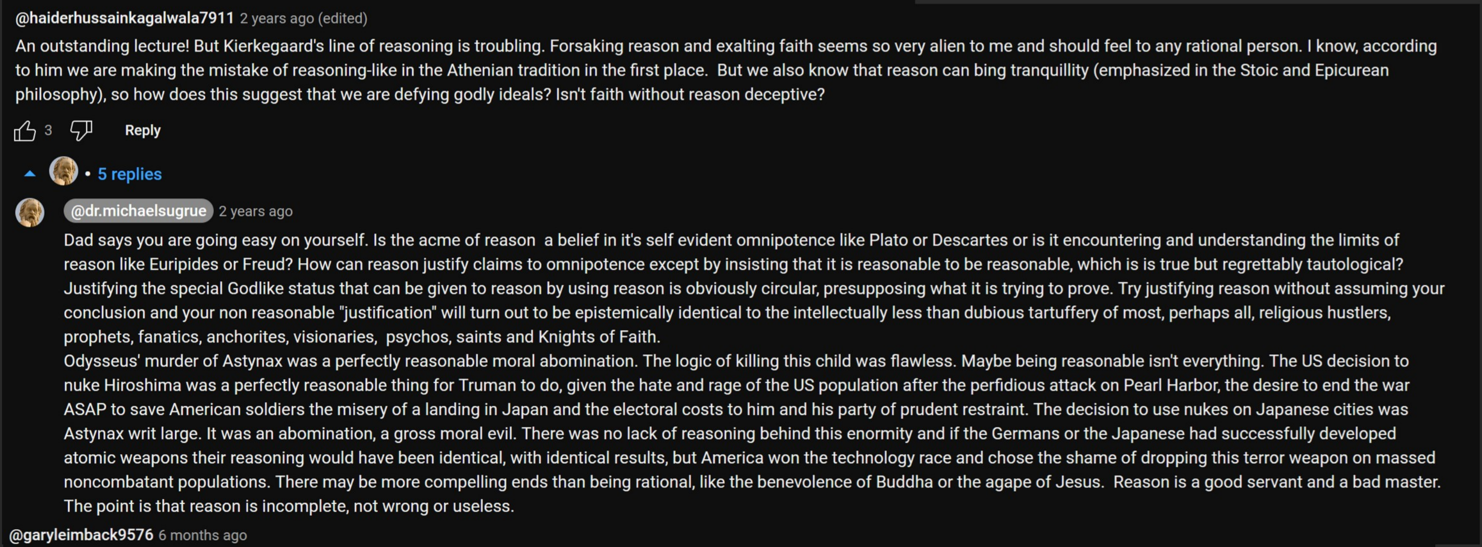
Kierkegaard's Leap of Faith


@kalinborisov-ps4cg 1 year ago

Kierkegaard is the kind of guy I simultaneously respect immensely and hate with burning passion. Same as Nietzsche.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

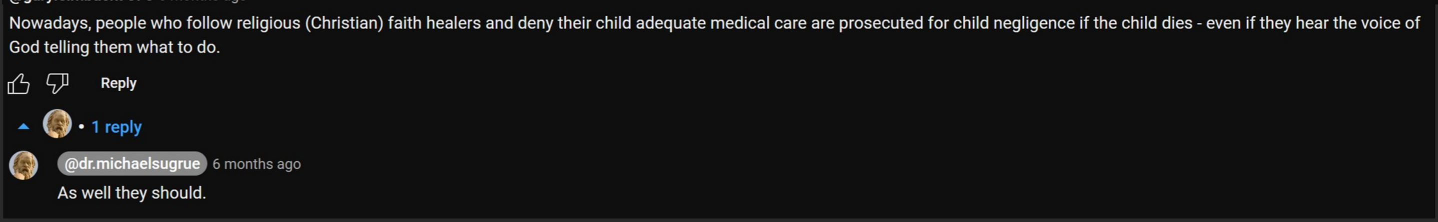
I agree. I understand the fascinating yet morbid qualities of both.


@haiderhussainkagalwala7911 2 years ago (edited)

An outstanding lecture! But Kierkegaard's line of reasoning is troubling. Forsaking reason and exalting faith seems so very alien to me and should feel to any rational person. I know, according to him we are making the mistake of reasoning-like in the Athenian tradition in the first place. But we also know that reason can bing tranquillity (emphasized in the Stoic and Epicurean philosophy), so how does this suggest that we are defying godly ideals? Isn't faith without reason deceptive?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says you are going easy on yourself. Is the acme of reason a belief in it's self evident omnipotence like Plato or Descartes or is it encountering and understanding the limits of reason like Euripides or Freud? How can reason justify claims to omnipotence except by insisting that it is reasonable to be reasonable, which is is true but regrettably tautological? Justifying the special Godlike status that can be given to reason by using reason is obviously circular, presupposing what it is trying to prove. Try justifying reason without assuming your conclusion and your non reasonable "justification" will turn out to be epistemically identical to the intellectually less than dubious tartuffery of most, perhaps all, religious hustlers, prophets, fanatics, anchorites, visionaries, psychos, saints and Knights of Faith.
Odysseus' murder of Astynax was a perfectly reasonable moral abomination. The logic of killing this child was flawless. Maybe being reasonable isn't everything. The US decision to nuke Hiroshima was a perfectly reasonable thing for Truman to do, given the hate and rage of the US population after the perfidious attack on Pearl Harbor, the desire to end the war ASAP to save American soldiers the misery of a landing in Japan and the electoral costs to him and his party of prudent restraint. The decision to use nukes on Japanese cities was Astynax writ large. It was an abomination, a gross moral evil. There was no lack of reasoning behind this enormity and if the Germans or the Japanese had successfully developed atomic weapons their reasoning would have been identical, with identical results, but America won the technology race and chose the shame of dropping this terror weapon on massed noncombatant populations. There may be more compelling ends than being rational, like the benevolence of Buddha or the agape of Jesus. Reason is a good servant and a bad master. The point is that reason is incomplete, not wrong or useless.

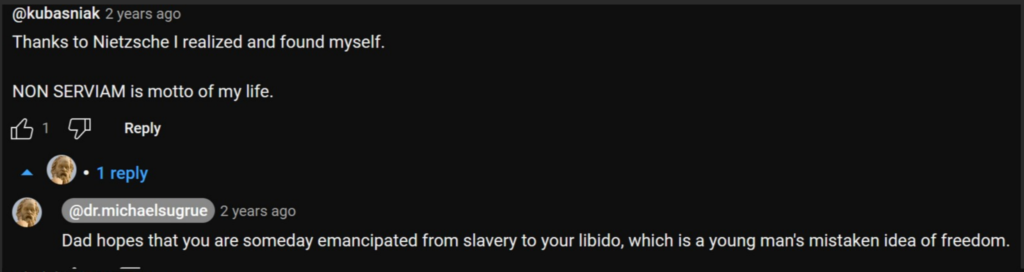

@garyleimback9576 6 months ago

Nowadays, people who follow religious (Christian) faith healers and deny their child adequate medical care are prosecuted for child negligence if the child dies - even if they hear the voice of God telling them what to do.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

As well they should.

Nietzsche and the Death of God



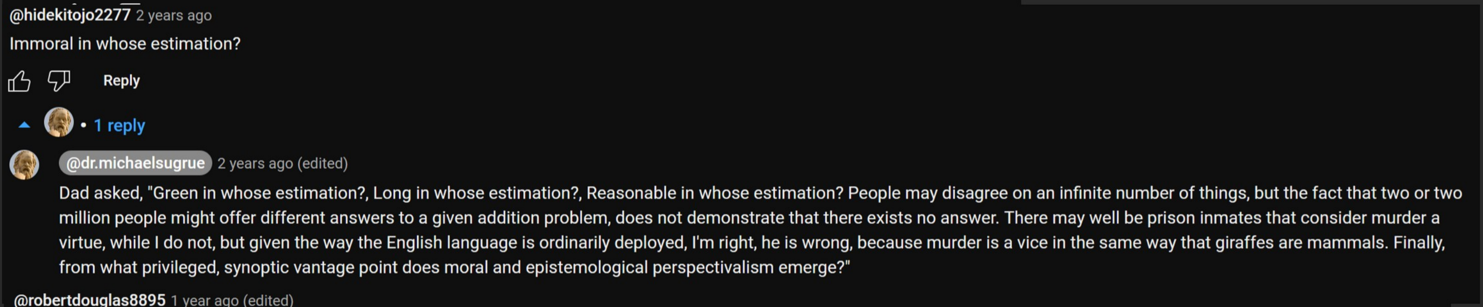
@kubasniak 2 years ago

Thanks to Nietzsche I realized and found myself.

NON SERVIAM is motto of my life.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad hopes that you are someday emancipated from slavery to your libido, which is a young man's mistaken idea of freedom.

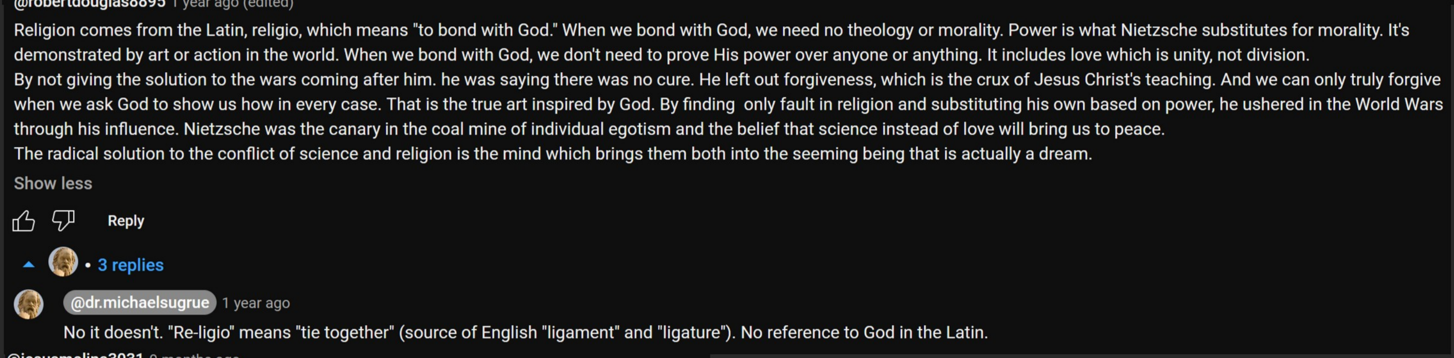


@hidekitojo2277 2 years ago

Immoral in whose estimation?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad asked, "Green in whose estimation?, Long in whose estimation?, Reasonable in whose estimation? People may disagree on an infinite number of things, but the fact that two or two million people might offer different answers to a given addition problem, does not demonstrate that there exists no answer. There may well be prison inmates that consider murder a virtue, while I do not, but given the way the English language is ordinarily deployed, I'm right, he is wrong, because murder is a vice in the same way that giraffes are mammals. Finally, from what privileged, synoptic vantage point does moral and epistemological perspectivalism emerge?"

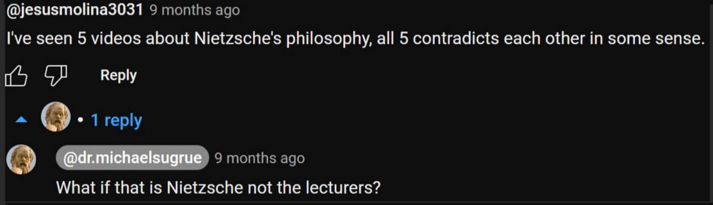


@robertdouglas8895 1 year ago (edited)

Religion comes from the Latin, religio, which means "to bond with God." When we bond with God, we need no theology or morality. Power is what Nietzsche substitutes for morality. It's demonstrated by art or action in the world. When we bond with God, we don't need to prove His power over anyone or anything. It includes love which is unity, not division.
By not giving the solution to the wars coming after him. he was saying there was no cure. He left out forgiveness, which is the crux of Jesus Christ's teaching. And we can only truly forgive when we ask God to show us how in every case. That is the true art inspired by God. By finding only fault in religion and substituting his own based on power, he ushered in the World Wars through his influence. Nietzsche was the canary in the coal mine of individual egotism and the belief that science instead of love will bring us to peace.
The radical solution to the conflict of science and religion is the mind which brings them both into the seeming being that is actually a dream.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

No it doesn't. "Re-ligio" means "tie together" (source of English "ligament" and "ligature"). No reference to God in the Latin.

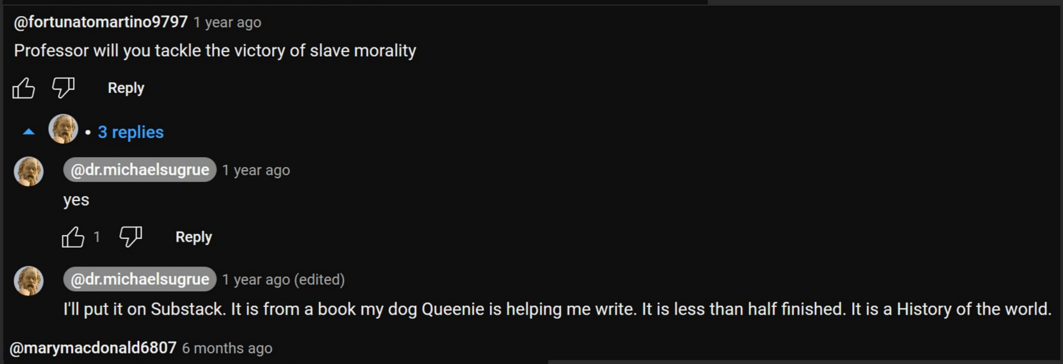


@jesusmolina3031 9 months ago

I've seen 5 videos about Nietzsche's philosophy, all 5 contradicts each other in some sense.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

What if that is Nietzsche not the lecturers?



@fortunatomartino9797 1 year ago

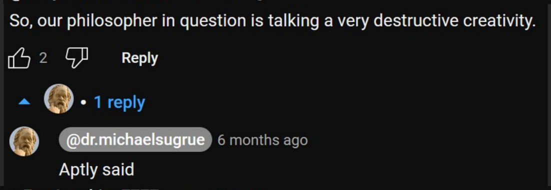
Professor will you tackle the victory of slave morality

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

yes

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I'll put it on Substack. It is from a book my dog Queenie is helping me write. It is less than half finished. It is a History of the world.

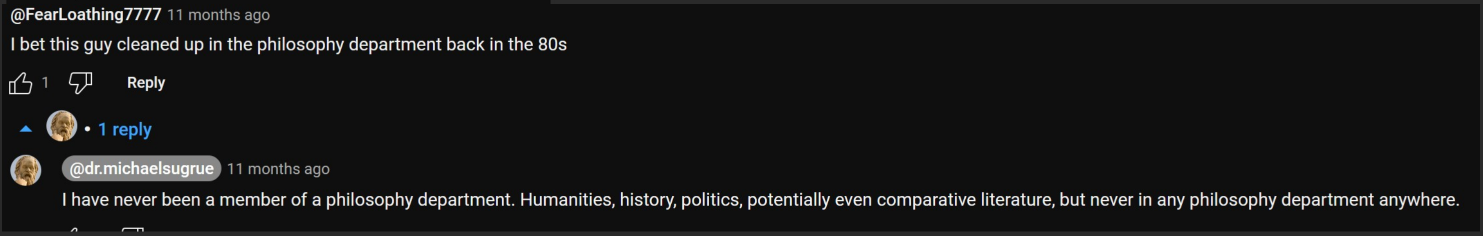


@marymacdonald6807 6 months ago

So, our philosopher in question is talking a very destructive creativity.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Aptly said

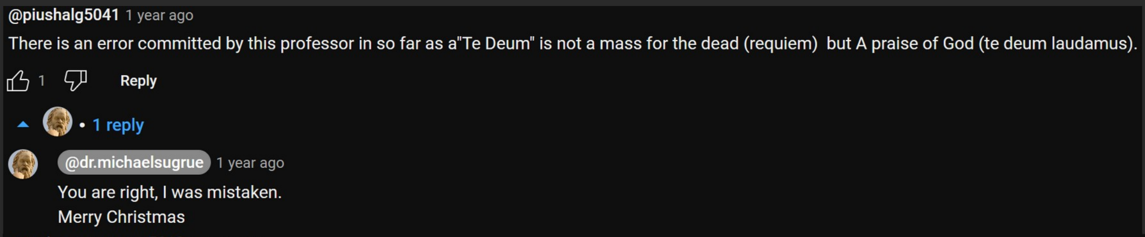


@FearLoathing7777 11 months ago

I bet this guy cleaned up in the philosophy department back in the 80s

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

I have never been a member of a philosophy department. Humanities, history, politics, potentially even comparative literature, but never in any philosophy department anywhere.

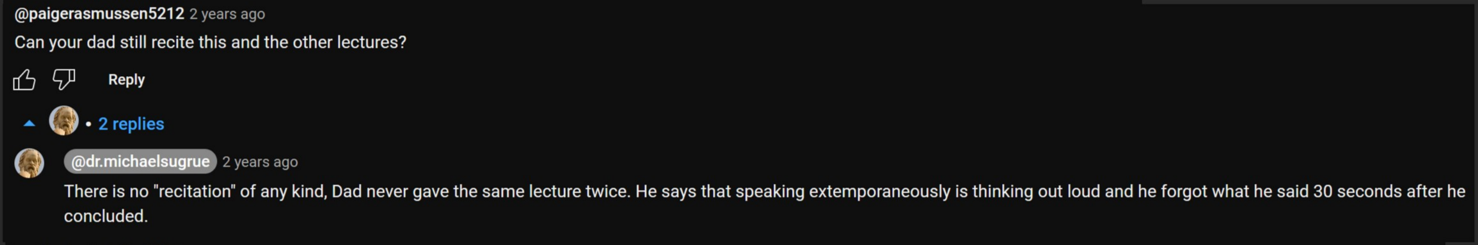


@piushalg5041 1 year ago

There is an error committed by this professor in so far as a"Te Deum" is not a mass for the dead (requiem) but A praise of God (te deum laudamus).

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are right, I was mistaken.
Merry Christmas

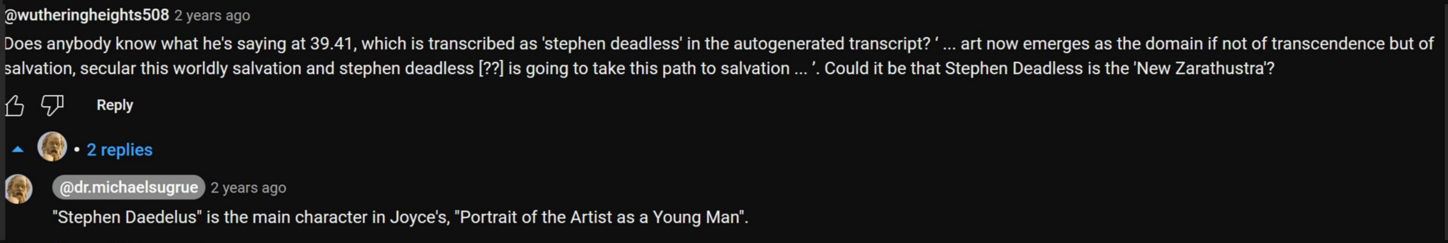


@paigerasmussen5212 2 years ago

Can your dad still recite this and the other lectures?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

There is no "recitation" of any kind, Dad never gave the same lecture twice. He says that speaking extemporaneously is thinking out loud and he forgot what he said 30 seconds after he concluded.

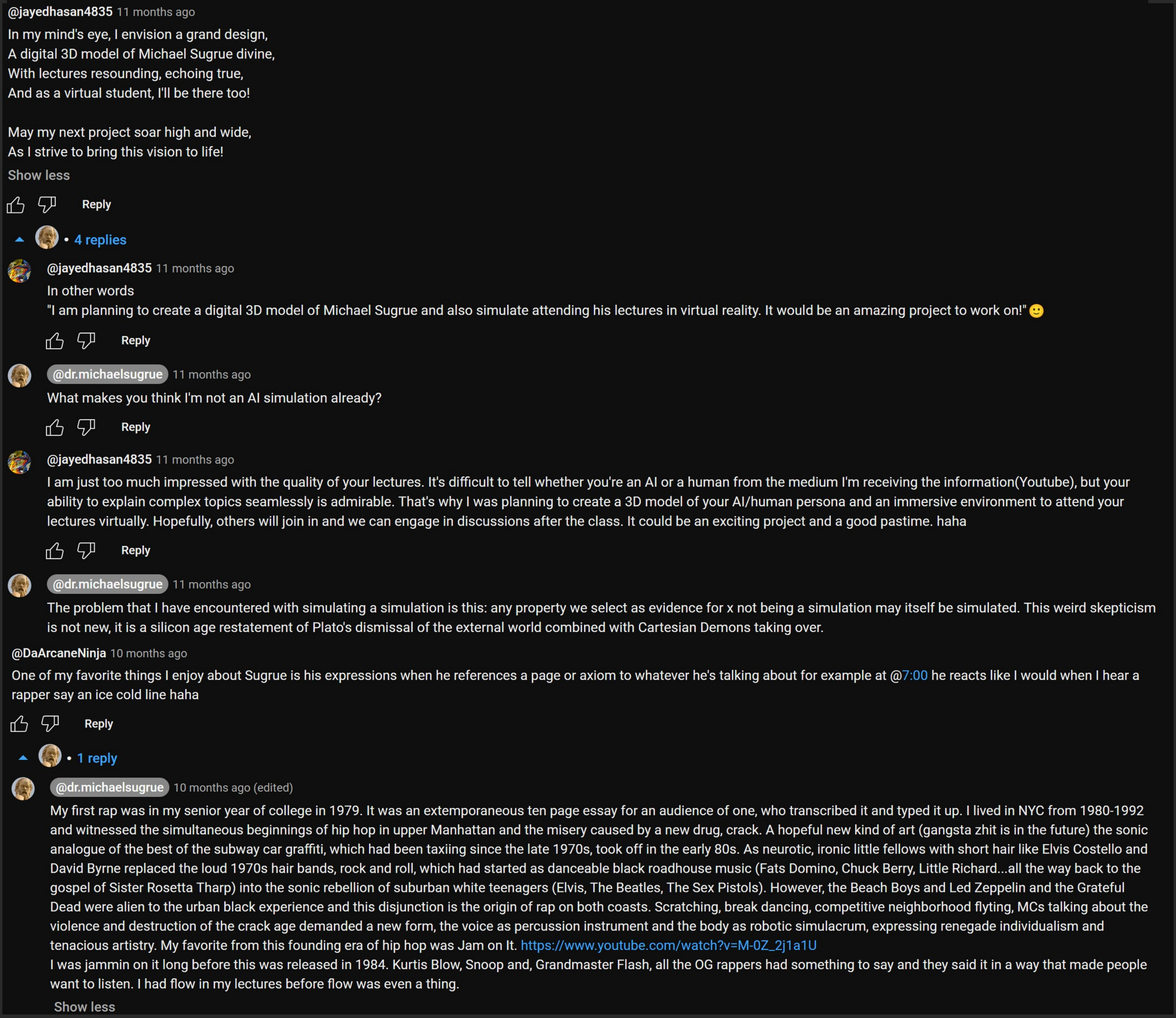


@wutheringheights508 2 years ago

Does anybody know what he's saying at 39.41, which is transcribed as 'stephen deadless' in the autogenerated transcript? ' ... art now emerges as the domain if not of transcendence but of salvation, secular this worldly salvation and stephen deadless [??] is going to take this path to salvation ... '. Could it be that Stephen Deadless is the 'New Zarathustra'?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

"Stephen Daedelus" is the main character in Joyce's, "Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man".



@jayedhasan4835 11 months ago

In my mind's eye, I envision a grand design,
A digital 3D model of Michael Sugrue divine,
With lectures resounding, echoing true,
And as a virtual student, I'll be there too!

May my next project soar high and wide,
As I strive to bring this vision to life!

@jayedhasan4835 11 months ago

In other words
"I am planning to create a digital 3D model of Michael Sugrue and also simulate attending his lectures in virtual reality. It would be an amazing project to work on!" 🙂

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

What makes you think I'm not an AI simulation already?

@jayedhasan4835 11 months ago

I am just too much impressed with the quality of your lectures. It's difficult to tell whether you're an AI or a human from the medium I'm receiving the information(Youtube), but your ability to explain complex topics seamlessly is admirable. That's why I was planning to create a 3D model of your AI/human persona and an immersive environment to attend your lectures virtually. Hopefully, others will join in and we can engage in discussions after the class. It could be an exciting project and a good pastime. haha

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

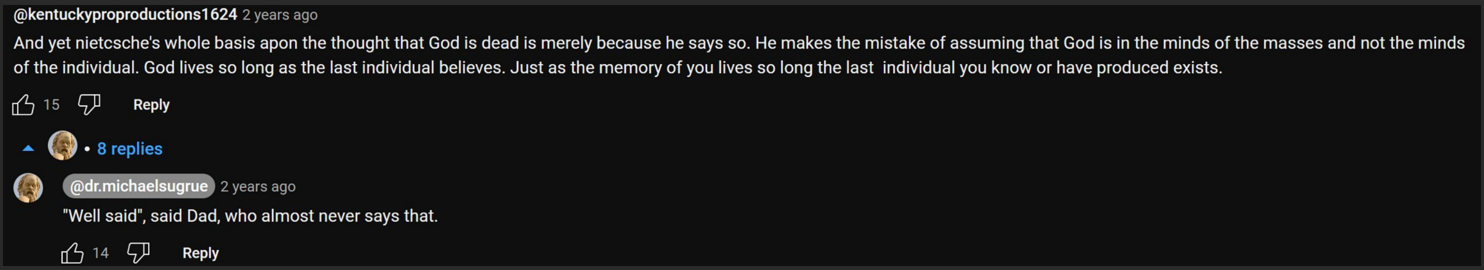
The problem that I have encountered with simulating a simulation is this: any property we select as evidence for x not being a simulation may itself be simulated. This weird skepticism is not new, it is a silicon age restatement of Plato's dismissal of the external world combined with Cartesian Demons taking over.

@DaArcaneNinja 10 months ago

One of my favorite things I enjoy about Sugrue is his expressions when he references a page or axiom to whatever he's talking about for example at @7:00 he reacts like I would when I hear a rapper say an ice cold line haha

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

My first rap was in my senior year of college in 1979. It was an extemporaneous ten page essay for an audience of one, who transcribed it and typed it up. I lived in NYC from 1980-1992 and witnessed the simultaneous beginnings of hip hop in upper Manhattan and the misery caused by a new drug, crack. A hopeful new kind of art (gangsta zhit is in the future) the sonic analogue of the best of the subway car graffiti, which had been taxiing since the late 1970s, took off in the early 80s. As neurotic, ironic little fellows with short hair like Elvis Costello and David Byrne replaced the loud 1970s hair bands, rock and roll, which had started as danceable black roadhouse music (Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Little Richard...all the way back to the gospel of Sister Rosetta Tharp) into the sonic rebellion of suburban white teenagers (Elvis, The Beatles, The Sex Pistols). However, the Beach Boys and Led Zeppelin and the Grateful Dead were alien to the urban black experience and this disjunction is the origin of rap on both coasts. Scratching, break dancing, competitive neighborhood flyting, MCs talking about the violence and destruction of the crack age demanded a new form, the voice as percussion instrument and the body as robotic simulacrum, expressing renegade individualism and tenacious artistry. My favorite from this founding era of hip hop was Jam on It. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-0Z_2j1a1U
I was jammin on it long before this was released in 1984. Kurtis Blow, Snoop and, Grandmaster Flash, all the OG rappers had something to say and they said it in a way that made people want to listen. I had flow in my lectures before flow was even a thing.



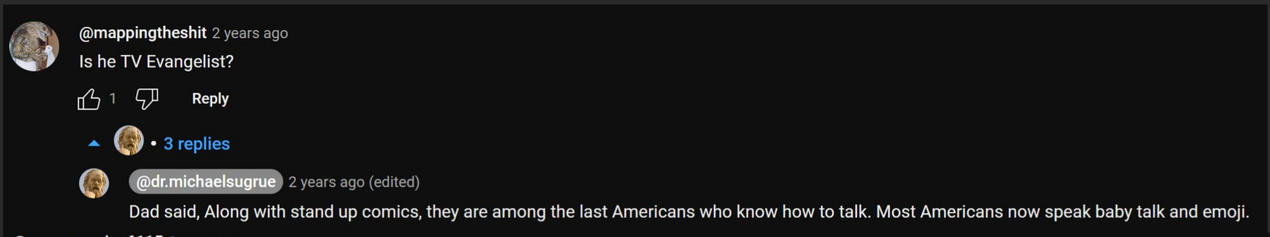
@kentuckyproproductions1624 2 years ago

And yet nietcsche's whole basis apon the thought that God is dead is merely because he says so. He makes the mistake of assuming that God is in the minds of the masses and not the minds of the individual. God lives so long as the last individual believes. Just as the memory of you lives so long the last individual you know or have produced exists.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

"Well said", said Dad, who almost never says that.

Joyce: From Religion to Art

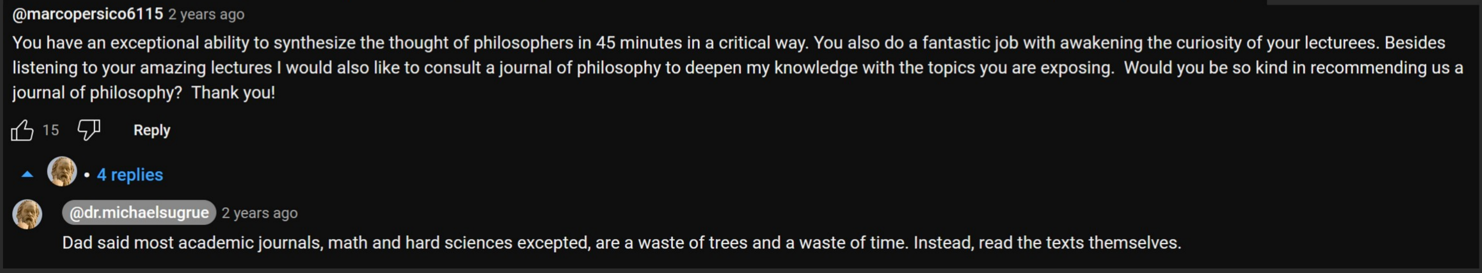


@mappingtheshit 2 years ago

Is he TV Evangelist?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, Along with stand up comics, they are among the last Americans who know how to talk. Most Americans now speak baby talk and emoji.



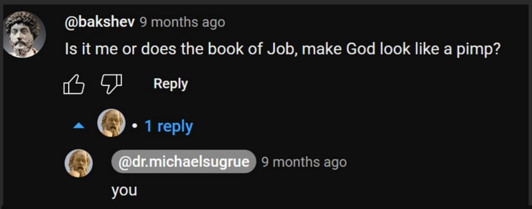
@marcopersico6115 2 years ago

You have an exceptional ability to synthesize the thought of philosophers in 45 minutes in a critical way. You also do a fantastic job with awakening the curiosity of your lecturees. Besides listening to your amazing lectures I would also like to consult a journal of philosophy to deepen my knowledge with the topics you are exposing. Would you be so kind in recommending us a journal of philosophy? Thank you!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said most academic journals, math and hard sciences excepted, are a waste of trees and a waste of time. Instead, read the texts themselves.

The Book of Job

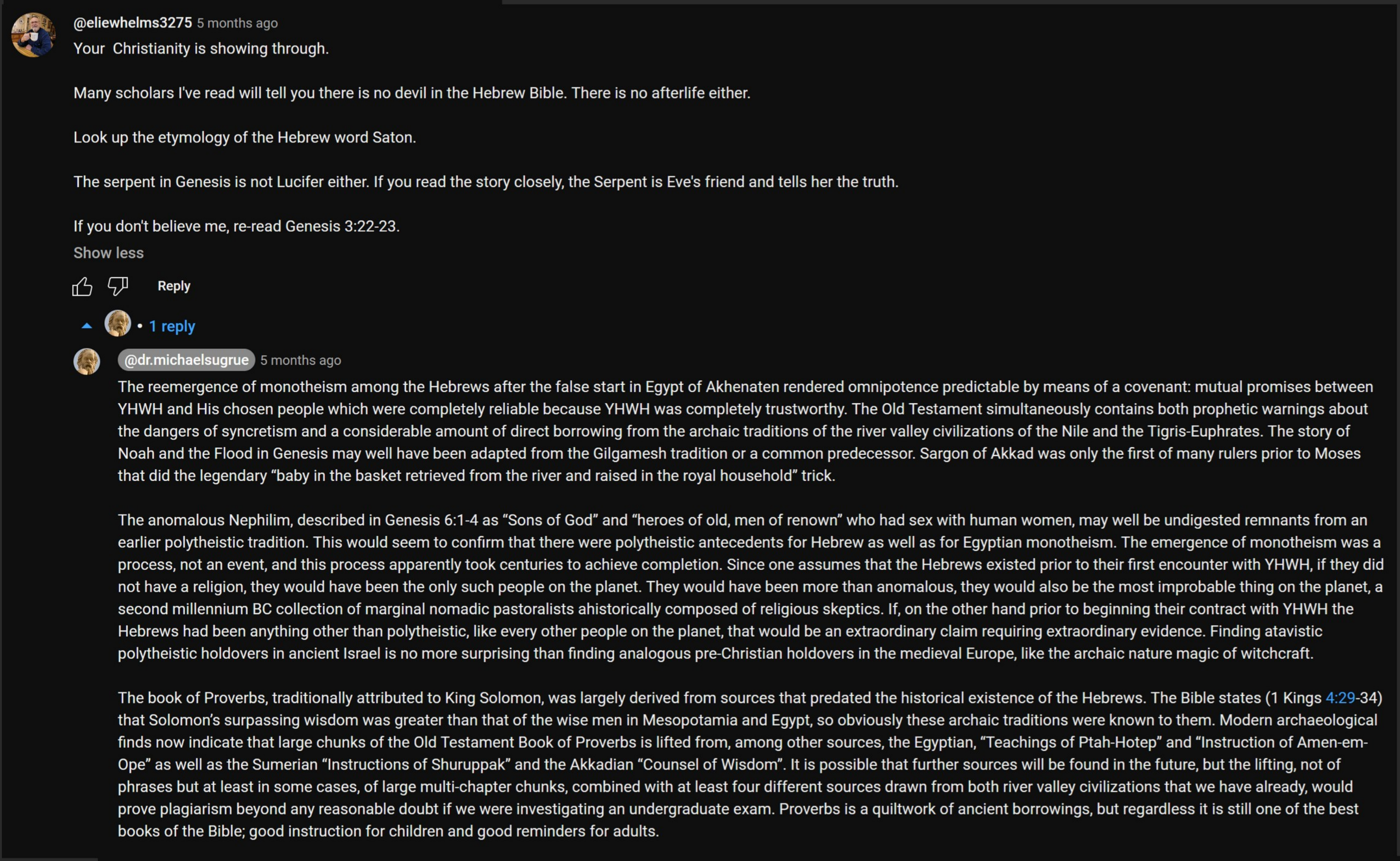


@bakshev 9 months ago

Is it me or does the book of Job, make God look like a pimp?

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

you



@eliewhelms3275 5 months ago

Your Christianity is showing through.

Many scholars I've read will tell you there is no devil in the Hebrew Bible. There is no afterlife either.

Look up the etymology of the Hebrew word Saton.

The serpent in Genesis is not Lucifer either. If you read the story closely, the Serpent is Eve's friend and tells her the truth.

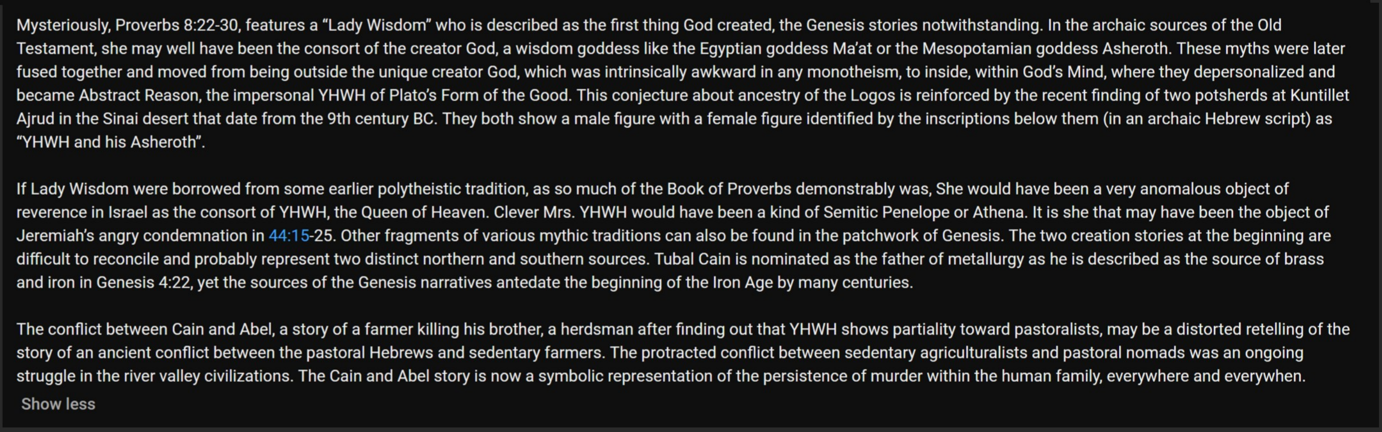
If you don't believe me, re-read Genesis 3:22-23.

@dr.michaelsugrue 5 months ago

The reemergence of monotheism among the Hebrews after the false start in Egypt of Akhenaten rendered omnipotence predictable by means of a covenant: mutual promises between YHWH and His chosen people which were completely reliable because YHWH was completely trustworthy. The Old Testament simultaneously contains both prophetic warnings about the dangers of syncretism and a considerable amount of direct borrowing from the archaic traditions of the river valley civilizations of the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates. The story of Noah and the Flood in Genesis may well have been adapted from the Gilgamesh tradition or a common predecessor. Sargon of Akkad was only the first of many rulers prior to Moses that did the legendary “baby in the basket retrieved from the river and raised in the royal household” trick.

The anomalous Nephilim, described in Genesis 6:1-4 as “Sons of God” and “heroes of old, men of renown” who had sex with human women, may well be undigested remnants from an earlier polytheistic tradition. This would seem to confirm that there were polytheistic antecedents for Hebrew as well as for Egyptian monotheism. The emergence of monotheism was a process, not an event, and this process apparently took centuries to achieve completion. Since one assumes that the Hebrews existed prior to their first encounter with YHWH, if they did not have a religion, they would have been the only such people on the planet. They would have been more than anomalous, they would also be the most improbable thing on the planet, a second millennium BC collection of marginal nomadic pastoralists ahistorically composed of religious skeptics. If, on the other hand prior to beginning their contract with YHWH the Hebrews had been anything other than polytheistic, like every other people on the planet, that would be an extraordinary claim requiring extraordinary evidence. Finding atavistic polytheistic holdovers in ancient Israel is no more surprising than finding analogous pre-Christian holdovers in the medieval Europe, like the archaic nature magic of witchcraft.

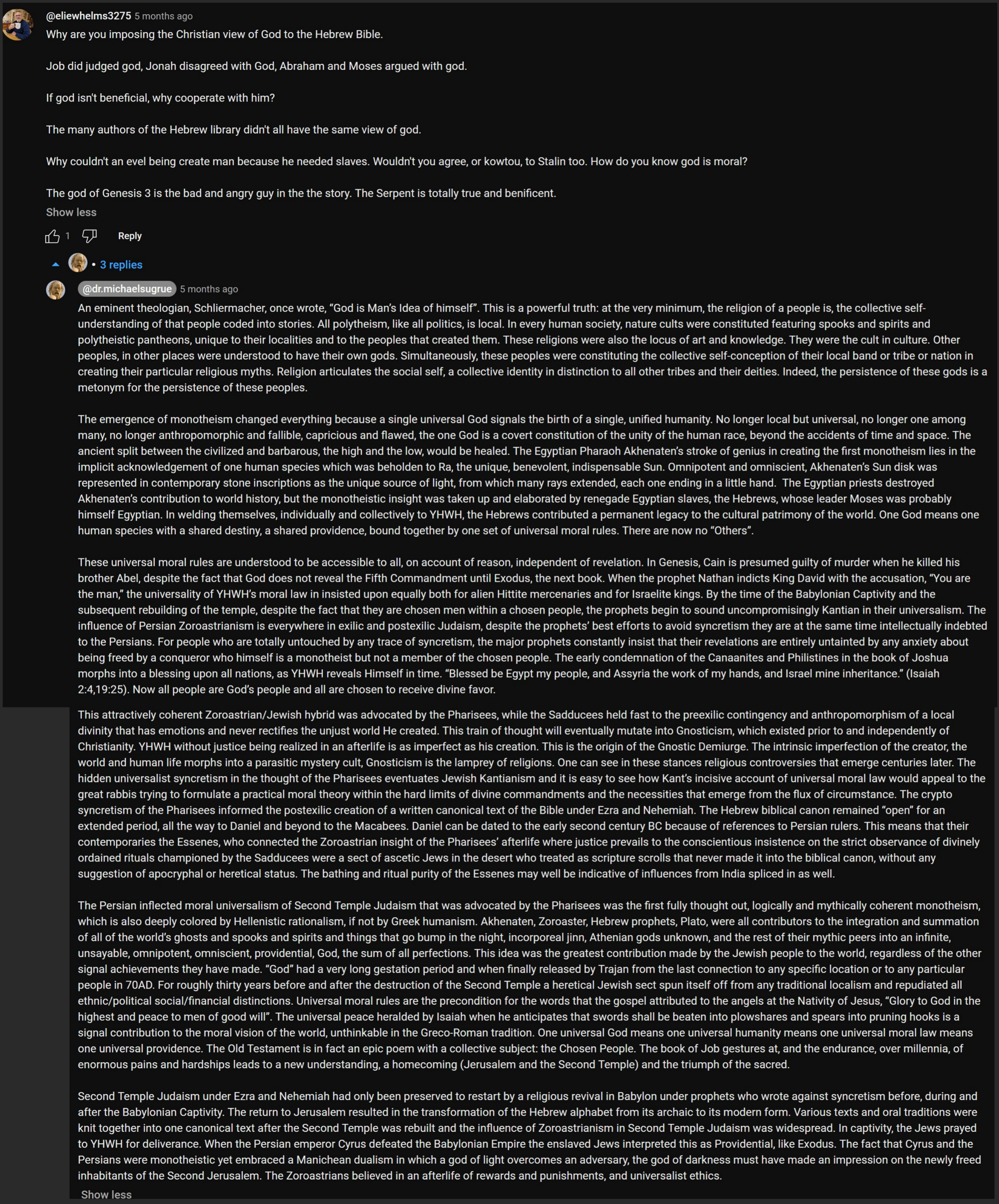
The book of Proverbs, traditionally attributed to King Solomon, was largely derived from sources that predated the historical existence of the Hebrews. The Bible states (1 Kings 4:29-34) that Solomon’s surpassing wisdom was greater than that of the wise men in Mesopotamia and Egypt, so obviously these archaic traditions were known to them. Modern archaeological finds now indicate that large chunks of the Old Testament Book of Proverbs is lifted from, among other sources, the Egyptian, “Teachings of Ptah-Hotep” and “Instruction of Amen-em-Ope” as well as the Sumerian “Instructions of Shuruppak” and the Akkadian “Counsel of Wisdom”. It is possible that further sources will be found in the future, but the lifting, not of phrases but at least in some cases, of large multi-chapter chunks, combined with at least four different sources drawn from both river valley civilizations that we have already, would prove plagiarism beyond any reasonable doubt if we were investigating an undergraduate exam. Proverbs is a quiltwork of ancient borrowings, but regardless it is still one of the best books of the Bible; good instruction for children and good reminders for adults.



Mysteriously, Proverbs 8:22-30, features a “Lady Wisdom” who is described as the first thing God created, the Genesis stories notwithstanding. In the archaic sources of the Old Testament, she may well have been the consort of the creator God, a wisdom goddess like the Egyptian goddess Ma’at or the Mesopotamian goddess Asheroth. These myths were later fused together and moved from being outside the unique creator God, which was intrinsically awkward in any monotheism, to inside, within God’s Mind, where they depersonalized and became Abstract Reason, the impersonal YHWH of Plato’s Form of the Good. This conjecture about ancestry of the Logos is reinforced by the recent finding of two potsherds at Kuntillet Ajrud in the Sinai desert that date from the 9th century BC. They both show a male figure with a female figure identified by the inscriptions below them (in an archaic Hebrew script) as “YHWH and his Asheroth”.

If Lady Wisdom were borrowed from some earlier polytheistic tradition, as so much of the Book of Proverbs demonstrably was, She would have been a very anomalous object of reverence in Israel as the consort of YHWH, the Queen of Heaven. Clever Mrs. YHWH would have been a kind of Semitic Penelope or Athena. It is she that may have been the object of Jeremiah’s angry condemnation in 44:15-25. Other fragments of various mythic traditions can also be found in the patchwork of Genesis. The two creation stories at the beginning are difficult to reconcile and probably represent two distinct northern and southern sources. Tubal Cain is nominated as the father of metallurgy as he is described as the source of brass and iron in Genesis 4:22, yet the sources of the Genesis narratives antedate the beginning of the Iron Age by many centuries.

The conflict between Cain and Abel, a story of a farmer killing his brother, a herdsman after finding out that YHWH shows partiality toward pastoralists, may be a distorted retelling of the story of an ancient conflict between the pastoral Hebrews and sedentary farmers. The protracted conflict between sedentary agriculturalists and pastoral nomads was an ongoing struggle in the river valley civilizations. The Cain and Abel story is now a symbolic representation of the persistence of murder within the human family, everywhere and everywhen.



@eliewhelms3275 5 months ago

Why are you imposing the Christian view of God to the Hebrew Bible.

Job did judged god, Jonah disagreed with God, Abraham and Moses argued with god.

If god isn't beneficial, why cooperate with him?

The many authors of the Hebrew library didn't all have the same view of god.

Why couldn't an evel being create man because he needed slaves. Wouldn't you agree, or kowtou, to Stalin too. How do you know god is moral?

The god of Genesis 3 is the bad and angry guy in the the story. The Serpent is totally true and benificent.

@dr.michaelsugrue 5 months ago

An eminent theologian, Schliermacher, once wrote, “God is Man's Idea of himself”. This is a powerful truth: at the very minimum, the religion of a people is, the collective self-understanding of that people coded into stories. All polytheism, like all politics, is local. In every human society, nature cults were constituted featuring spooks and spirits and polytheistic pantheons, unique to their localities and to the peoples that created them. These religions were also the locus of art and knowledge. They were the cult in culture. Other peoples, in other places were understood to have their own gods. Simultaneously, these peoples were constituting the collective self-conception of their local band or tribe or nation in creating their particular religious myths. Religion articulates the social self, a collective identity in distinction to all other tribes and their deities. Indeed, the persistence of these gods is a metonym for the persistence of these peoples.

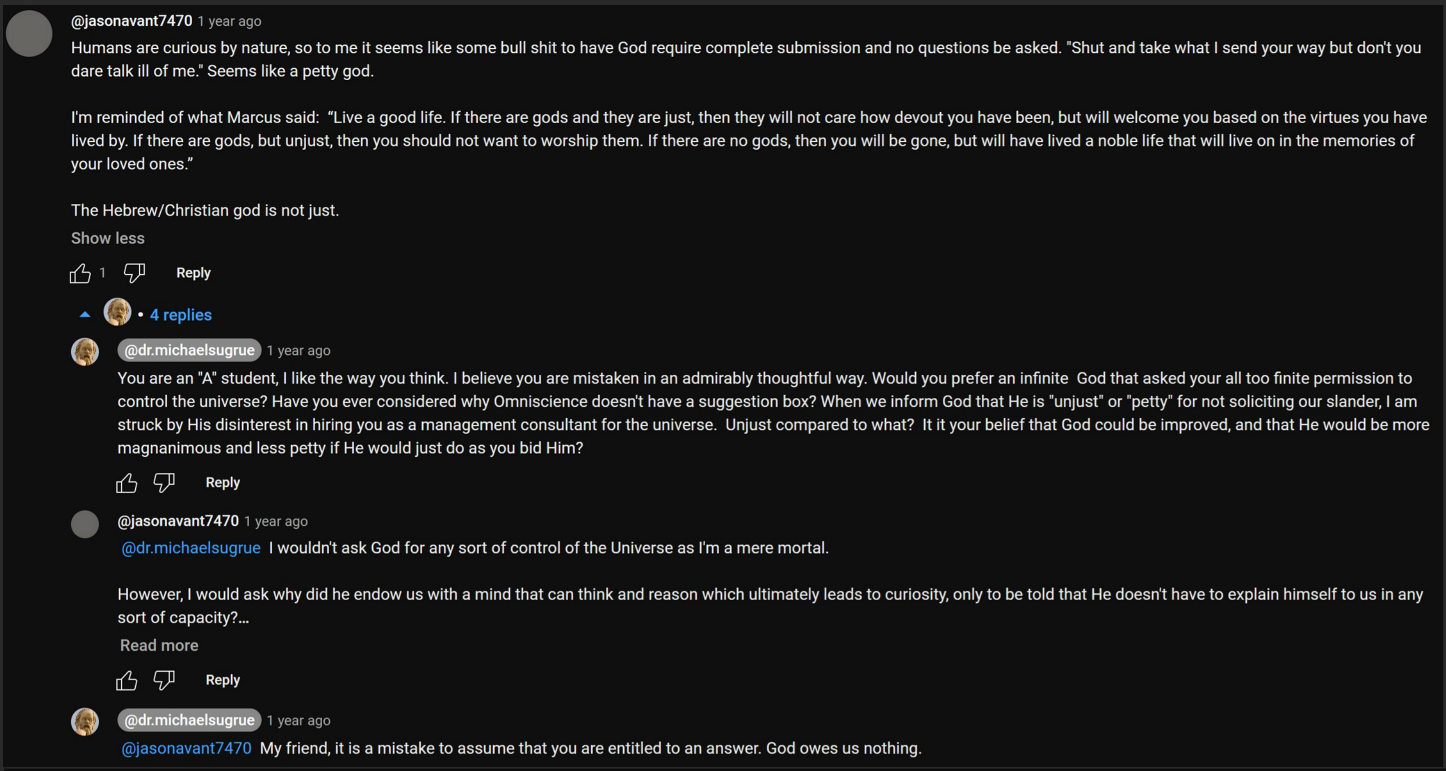
The emergence of monotheism changed everything because a single universal God signals the birth of a single, unified humanity. No longer local but universal, no longer one among many, no longer anthropomorphic and fallible, capricious and flawed, the one God is a covert constitution of the unity of the human race, beyond the accidents of time and space. The ancient split between the civilized and barbarous, the high and the low, would be healed. The Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten's stroke of genius in creating the first monotheism lies in the implicit acknowledgement of one human species which was beholden to Ra, the unique, benevolent, indispensable Sun. Omnipotent and omniscient, Akhenaten's Sun disk was represented in contemporary stone inscriptions as the unique source of light, from which many rays extended, each one ending in a little hand. The Egyptian priests destroyed Akhenaten's contribution to world history, but the monotheistic insight was taken up and elaborated by renegade Egyptian slaves, the Hebrews, whose leader Moses was probably himself Egyptian. In welding themselves, individually and collectively to YHWH, the Hebrews contributed a permanent legacy to the cultural patrimony of the world. One God means one human species with a shared destiny, a shared providence, bound together by one set of universal moral rules. There are now no “Others”.

These universal moral rules are understood to be accessible to all, on account of reason, independent of revelation. In Genesis, Cain is presumed guilty of murder when he killed his brother Abel, despite the fact that God does not reveal the Fifth Commandment until Exodus, the next book. When the prophet Nathan indicts King David with the accusation, “You are the man,” the universality of YHWH's moral law in insisted upon equally both for alien Hittite mercenaries and for Israelite kings. By the time of the Babylonian Captivity and the subsequent rebuilding of the temple, despite the fact that they are chosen men within a chosen people, the prophets begin to sound uncompromisingly Kantian in their universalism. The influence of Persian Zoroastrianism is everywhere in exilic and postexilic Judaism, despite the prophets' best efforts to avoid syncretism they are at the same time intellectually indebted to the Persians. For people who are totally untouched by any trace of syncretism, the major prophets constantly insist that their revelations are entirely untainted by any anxiety about being freed by a conqueror who himself is a monotheist but not a member of the chosen people. The early condemnation of the Canaanites and Philistines in the book of Joshua morphs into a blessing upon all nations, as YHWH reveals Himself in time. “Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.” (Isaiah 2:4,19:25). Now all people are God's people and all are chosen to receive divine favor.

This attractively coherent Zoroastrian/Jewish hybrid was advocated by the Pharisees, while the Sadducees held fast to the preexilic contingency and anthropomorphism of a local divinity that has emotions and never rectifies the unjust world He created. This train of thought will eventually mutate into Gnosticism, which existed prior to and independently of Christianity. YHWH without justice being realized in an afterlife is as imperfect as his creation. This is the origin of the Gnostic Demiurge. The intrinsic imperfection of the creator, the world and human life morphs into a parasitic mystery cult, Gnosticism is the lamprey of religions. One can see in these stances religious controversies that emerge centuries later. The hidden universalist syncretism in the thought of the Pharisees eventuates Jewish Kantianism and it is easy to see how Kant's incisive account of universal moral law would appeal to the great rabbis trying to formulate a practical moral theory within the hard limits of divine commandments and the necessities that emerge from the flux of circumstance. The crypto syncretism of the Pharisees informed the postexilic creation of a written canonical text of the Bible under Ezra and Nehemiah. The Hebrew biblical canon remained “open” for an extended period, all the way to Daniel and beyond to the Macabees. Daniel can be dated to the early second century BC because of references to Persian rulers. This means that their contemporaries the Essenes, who connected the Zoroastrian insight of the Pharisees' afterlife where justice prevails to the conscientious insistence on the strict observance of divinely ordained rituals championed by the Sadducees were a sect of ascetic Jews in the desert who treated as scripture scrolls that never made it into the biblical canon, without any suggestion of apocryphal or heretical status. The bathing and ritual purity of the Essenes may well be indicative of influences from India spliced in as well.

The Persian inflected moral universalism of Second Temple Judaism that was advocated by the Pharisees was the first fully thought out, logically and mythically coherent monotheism, which is also deeply colored by Hellenistic rationalism, if not by Greek humanism. Akhenaten, Zoroaster, Hebrew prophets, Plato, were all contributors to the integration and summation of all of the world's ghosts and spooks and spirits and things that go bump in the night, incorporeal jinn, Athenian gods unknown, and the rest of their mythic peers into an infinite, unsayable, omnipotent, omniscient, providential, God, the sum of all perfections. This idea was the greatest contribution made by the Jewish people to the world, regardless of the other signal achievements they have made. “God” had a very long gestation period and when finally released by Trajan from the last connection to any specific location or to any particular people in 70AD. For roughly thirty years before and after the destruction of the Second Temple a heretical Jewish sect spun itself off from any traditional localism and repudiated all ethnic/political social/financial distinctions. Universal moral rules are the precondition for the words that the gospel attributed to the angels at the Nativity of Jesus, “Glory to God in the highest and peace to men of good will”. The universal peace heralded by Isaiah when he anticipates that swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks is a signal contribution to the moral vision of the world, unthinkable in the Greco-Roman tradition. One universal God means one universal humanity means one universal moral law means one universal providence. The Old Testament is in fact an epic poem with a collective subject: the Chosen People. The book of Job gestures at, and the endurance, over millennia, of enormous pains and hardships leads to a new understanding, a homecoming (Jerusalem and the Second Temple) and the triumph of the sacred.

Second Temple Judaism under Ezra and Nehemiah had only been preserved to restart by a religious revival in Babylon under prophets who wrote against syncretism before, during and after the Babylonian Captivity. The return to Jerusalem resulted in the transformation of the Hebrew alphabet from its archaic to its modern form. Various texts and oral traditions were knit together into one canonical text after the Second Temple was rebuilt and the influence of Zoroastrianism in Second Temple Judaism was widespread. In captivity, the Jews prayed to YHWH for deliverance. When the Persian emperor Cyrus defeated the Babylonian Empire the enslaved Jews interpreted this as Providential, like Exodus. The fact that Cyrus and the Persians were monotheistic yet embraced a Manichean dualism in which a god of light overcomes an adversary, the god of darkness must have made an impression on the newly freed inhabitants of the Second Jerusalem. The Zoroastrians believed in an afterlife of rewards and punishments, and universalist ethics.



@jasonavant7470 1 year ago

Humans are curious by nature, so to me it seems like some bull shit to have God require complete submission and no questions be asked. "Shut and take what I send your way but don't you dare talk ill of me." Seems like a petty god.

I'm reminded of what Marcus said: "Live a good life. If there are gods and they are just, then they will not care how devout you have been, but will welcome you based on the virtues you have lived by. If there are gods, but unjust, then you should not want to worship them. If there are no gods, then you will be gone, but will have lived a noble life that will live on in the memories of your loved ones."

The Hebrew/Christian god is not just.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are an "A" student, I like the way you think. I believe you are mistaken in an admirably thoughtful way. Would you prefer an infinite God that asked your all too finite permission to control the universe? Have you ever considered why Omniscience doesn't have a suggestion box? When we inform God that He is "unjust" or "petty" for not soliciting our slander, I am struck by His disinterest in hiring you as a management consultant for the universe. Unjust compared to what? It it your belief that God could be improved, and that He would be more magnanimous and less petty if He would just do as you bid Him?

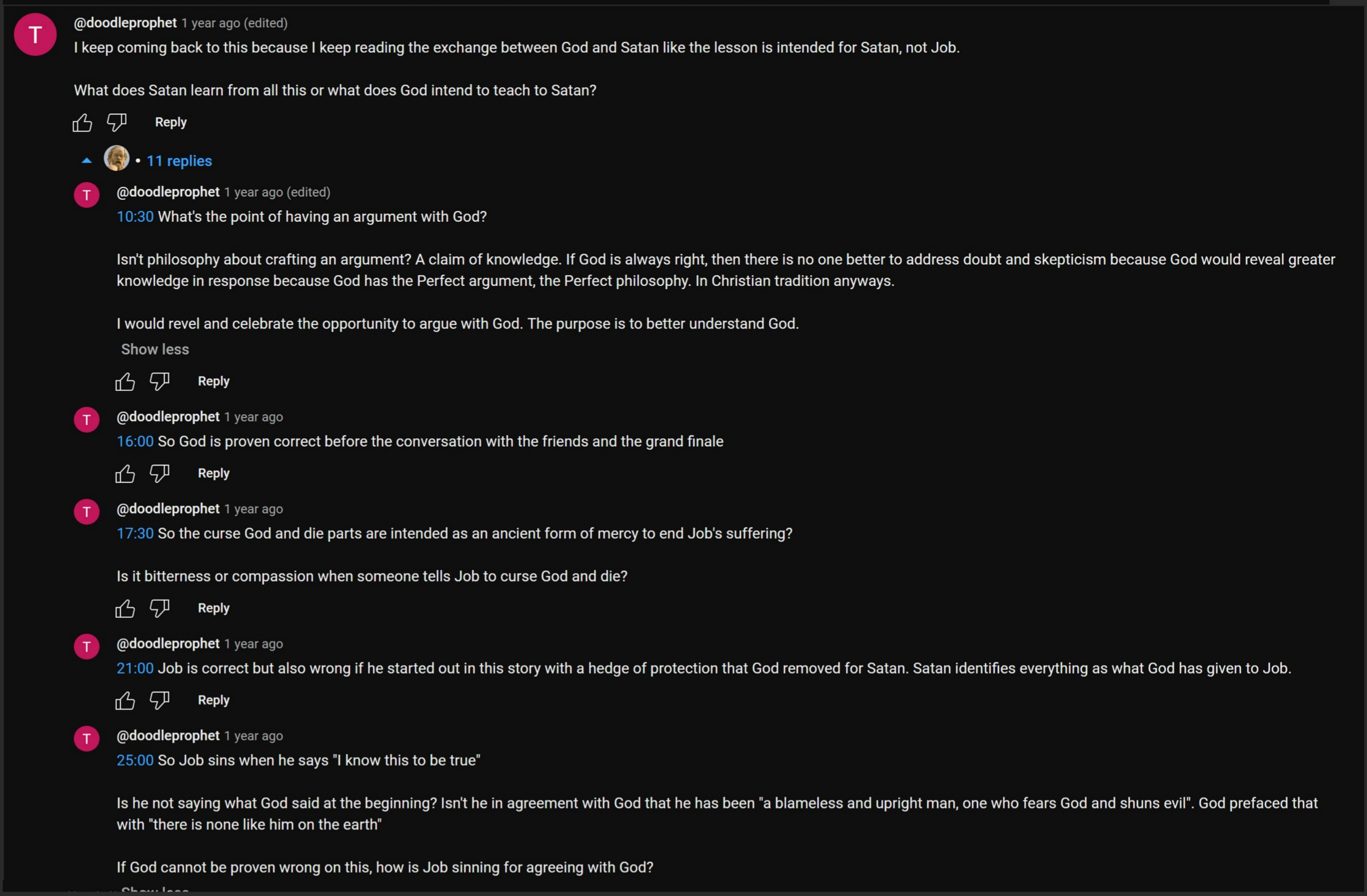
@jasonavant7470 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I wouldn't ask God for any sort of control of the Universe as I'm a mere mortal.

However, I would ask why did he endow us with a mind that can think and reason which ultimately leads to curiosity, only to be told that He doesn't have to explain himself to us in any sort of capacity?...

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@jasonavant7470 My friend, it is a mistake to assume that you are entitled to an answer. God owes us nothing.



@doodleprophet 1 year ago (edited)

I keep coming back to this because I keep reading the exchange between God and Satan like the lesson is intended for Satan, not Job.

What does Satan learn from all this or what does God intend to teach to Satan?

@doodleprophet 1 year ago (edited)

10:30 What's the point of having an argument with God?

Isn't philosophy about crafting an argument? A claim of knowledge. If God is always right, then there is no one better to address doubt and skepticism because God would reveal greater knowledge in response because God has the Perfect argument, the Perfect philosophy. In Christian tradition anyways.

I would revel and celebrate the opportunity to argue with God. The purpose is to better understand God.

@doodleprophet 1 year ago

16:00 So God is proven correct before the conversation with the friends and the grand finale

@doodleprophet 1 year ago

17:30 So the curse God and die parts are intended as an ancient form of mercy to end Job's suffering?

Is it bitterness or compassion when someone tells Job to curse God and die?

@doodleprophet 1 year ago

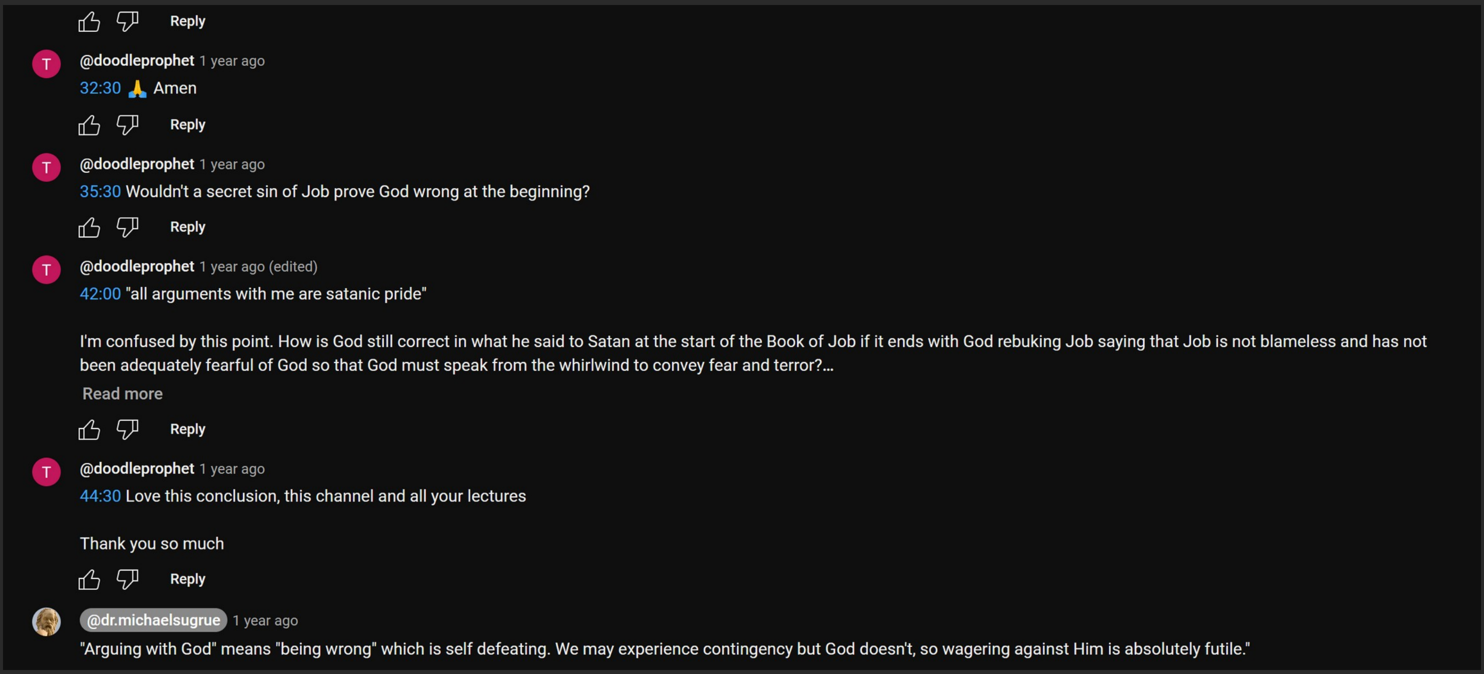
21:00 Job is correct but also wrong if he started out in this story with a hedge of protection that God removed for Satan. Satan identifies everything as what God has given to Job.

@doodleprophet 1 year ago

25:00 So Job sins when he says "I know this to be true"

Is he not saying what God said at the beginning? Isn't he in agreement with God that he has been "a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil". God prefaced that with "there is none like him on the earth"

If God cannot be proven wrong on this, how is Job sinning for agreeing with God?



@doodleprophet 1 year ago
32:30 🙏 Amen

@doodleprophet 1 year ago
35:30 Wouldn't a secret sin of Job prove God wrong at the beginning?

@doodleprophet 1 year ago (edited)
42:00 "all arguments with me are satanic pride"

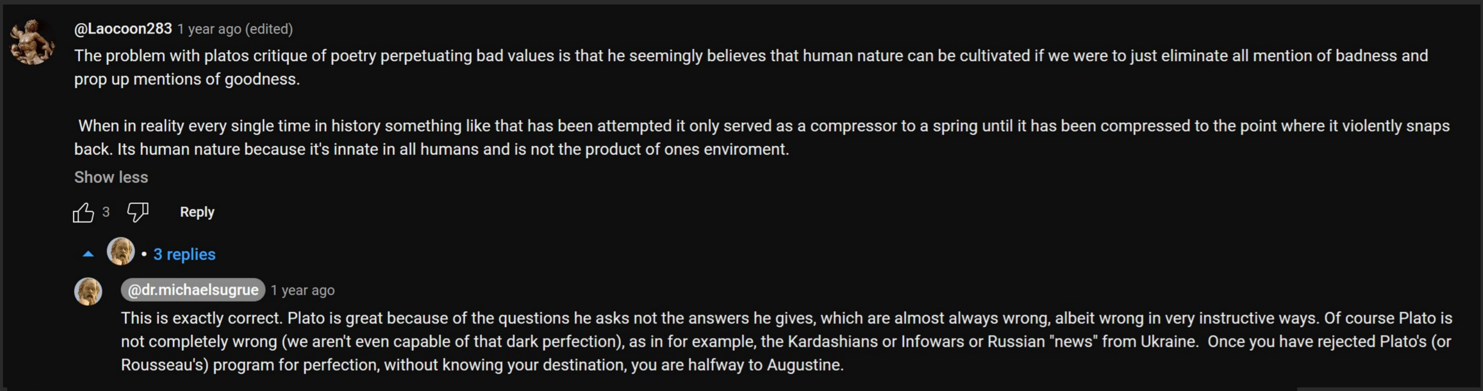
I'm confused by this point. How is God still correct in what he said to Satan at the start of the Book of Job if it ends with God rebuking Job saying that Job is not blameless and has not been adequately fearful of God so that God must speak from the whirlwind to convey fear and terror?…

@doodleprophet 1 year ago
44:30 Love this conclusion, this channel and all your lectures

Thank you so much

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
"Arguing with God" means "being wrong" which is self defeating. We may experience contingency but God doesn't, so wagering against Him is absolutely futile."

Plato and Poetry



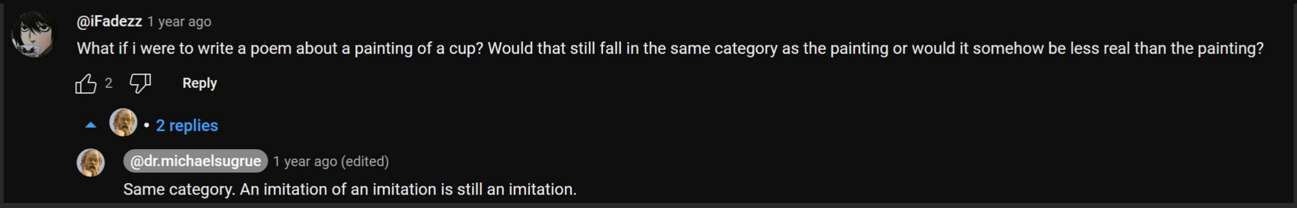
@Laocoon283 1 year ago (edited)

The problem with platos critique of poetry perpetuating bad values is that he seemingly believes that human nature can be cultivated if we were to just eliminate all mention of badness and prop up mentions of goodness.

When in reality every single time in history something like that has been attempted it only served as a compressor to a spring until it has been compressed to the point where it violently snaps back. Its human nature because it's innate in all humans and is not the product of ones enviroment.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

This is exactly correct. Plato is great because of the questions he asks not the answers he gives, which are almost always wrong, albeit wrong in very instructive ways. Of course Plato is not completely wrong (we aren't even capable of that dark perfection), as in for example, the Kardashians or Infowars or Russian "news" from Ukraine. Once you have rejected Plato's (or Rousseau's) program for perfection, without knowing your destination, you are halfway to Augustine.



@iFadezz 1 year ago

What if i were to write a poem about a painting of a cup? Would that still fall in the same category as the painting or would it somehow be less real than the painting?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Same category. An imitation of an imitation is still an imitation.

Thucydides and the Dawn of History

@gspurlock1118 2 years ago

There seem to be a lot of parallels between Thucydides and Nietzsche. Both were the messengers of the death of their respective religious myths, i.e., God or Gods and wrote about it extensively. Now I need to listen to both again. . .

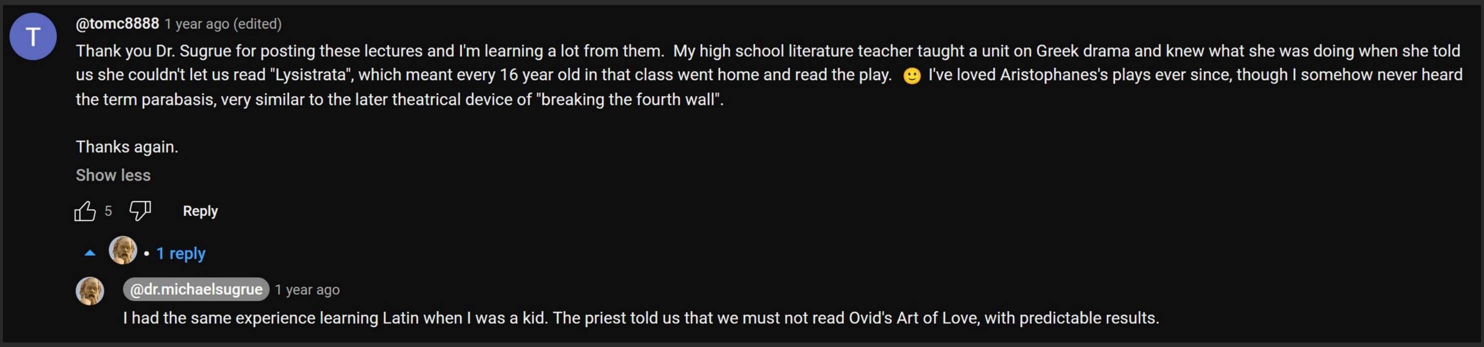
12 Reply

• 3 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Exactly right, Nietzsche was the last of the presocratics.

Aristophanes and Very Old Jokes



@tomc8888 1 year ago (edited)

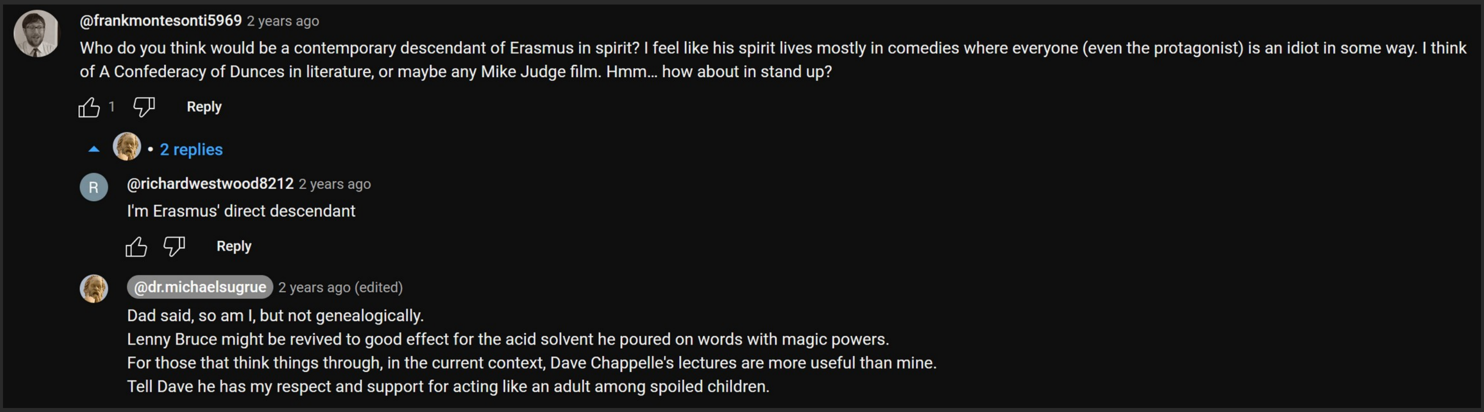
Thank you Dr. Sugrue for posting these lectures and I'm learning a lot from them. My high school literature teacher taught a unit on Greek drama and knew what she was doing when she told us she couldn't let us read "Lysistrata", which meant every 16 year old in that class went home and read the play. 🙂 I've loved Aristophanes's plays ever since, though I somehow never heard the term parabasis, very similar to the later theatrical device of "breaking the fourth wall".

Thanks again.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I had the same experience learning Latin when I was a kid. The priest told us that we must not read Ovid's Art of Love, with predictable results.

Erasmus, In Praise of Folly



@frankmontesonti5969 2 years ago

Who do you think would be a contemporary descendant of Erasmus in spirit? I feel like his spirit lives mostly in comedies where everyone (even the protagonist) is an idiot in some way. I think of A Confederacy of Dunces in literature, or maybe any Mike Judge film. Hmm… how about in stand up?

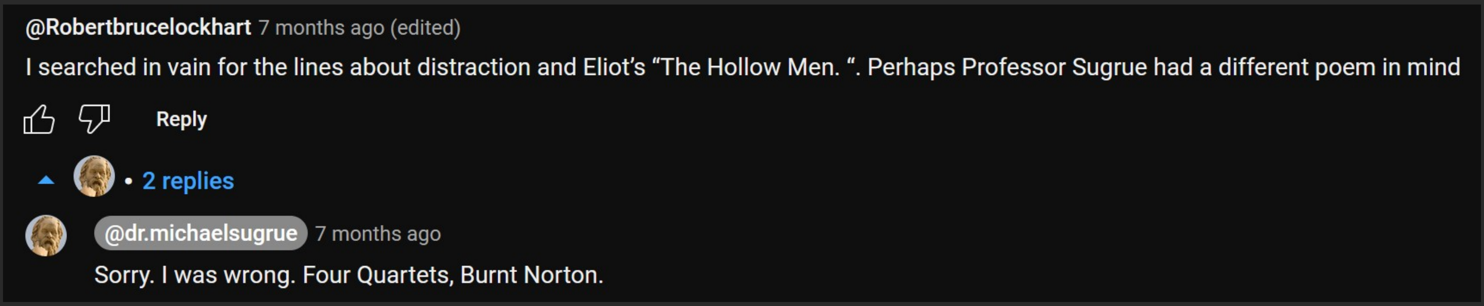
@richardwestwood8212 2 years ago

I'm Erasmus' direct descendant

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, so am I, but not genealogically.
Lenny Bruce might be revived to good effect for the acid solvent he poured on words with magic powers.
For those that think things through, in the current context, Dave Chappelle's lectures are more useful than mine.
Tell Dave he has my respect and support for acting like an adult among spoiled children.

Pascal, Pensses



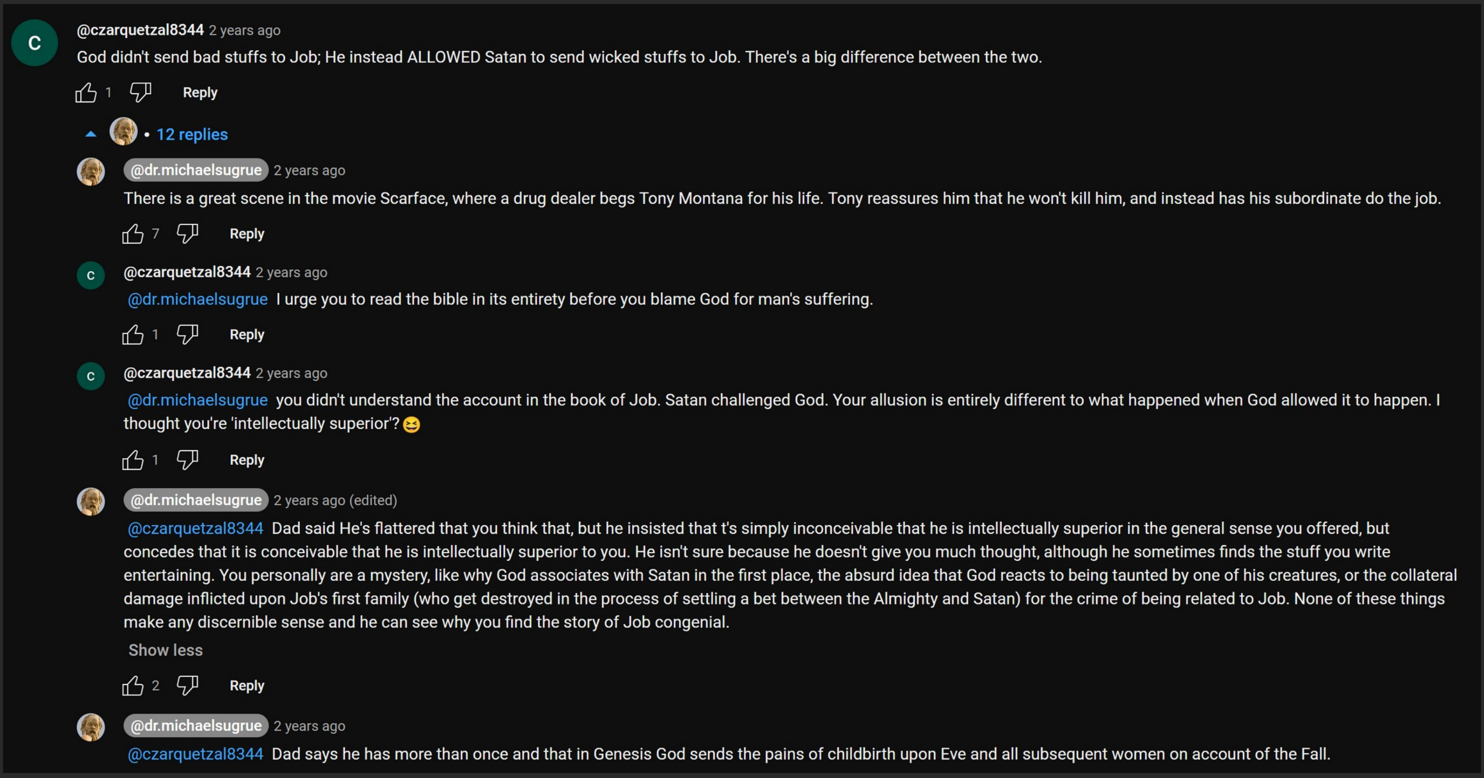
@Robertbrucelockhart 7 months ago (edited)

I searched in vain for the lines about distraction and Eliot's "The Hollow Men. ". Perhaps Professor Sugrue had a different poem in mind

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Sorry. I was wrong. Four Quartets, Burnt Norton.

Defoe, Robinson Crusoe



@czarquetzal8344 2 years ago
God didn't send bad stuffs to Job; He instead ALLOWED Satan to send wicked stuffs to Job. There's a big difference between the two.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
There is a great scene in the movie Scarface, where a drug dealer begs Tony Montana for his life. Tony reassures him that he won't kill him, and instead has his subordinate do the job.

@czarquetzal8344 2 years ago
@dr.michaelsugrue I urge you to read the bible in its entirety before you blame God for man's suffering.

@czarquetzal8344 2 years ago
@dr.michaelsugrue you didn't understand the account in the book of Job. Satan challenged God. Your allusion is entirely different to what happened when God allowed it to happen. I thought you're 'intellectually superior'? 😆

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)
@czarquetzal8344 Dad said He's flattered that you think that, but he insisted that t's simply inconceivable that he is intellectually superior in the general sense you offered, but concedes that it is conceivable that he is intellectually superior to you. He isn't sure because he doesn't give you much thought, although he sometimes finds the stuff you write entertaining. You personally are a mystery, like why God associates with Satan in the first place, the absurd idea that God reacts to being taunted by one of his creatures, or the collateral damage inflicted upon Job's first family (who get destroyed in the process of settling a bet between the Almighty and Satan) for the crime of being related to Job. None of these things make any discernible sense and he can see why you find the story of Job congenial.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
@czarquetzal8344 Dad says he has more than once and that in Genesis God sends the pains of childbirth upon Eve and all subsequent women on account of the Fall.

Swift, Gulliver's Travels

@Ealdorman_of_Mercia 3 years ago

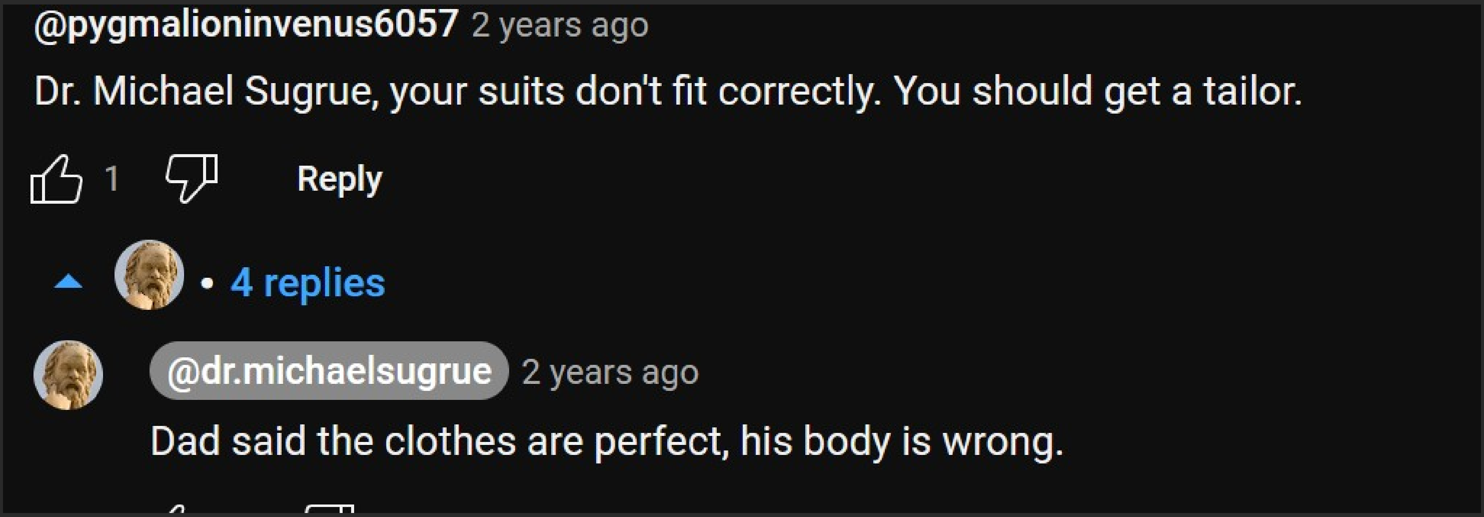
Please tell me, how come this has been uploaded today but looks like it was taped in 1988 ?

6
Reply
2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

The videos on this channel are from the lecture archives of Dr. Sugrue.

Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther



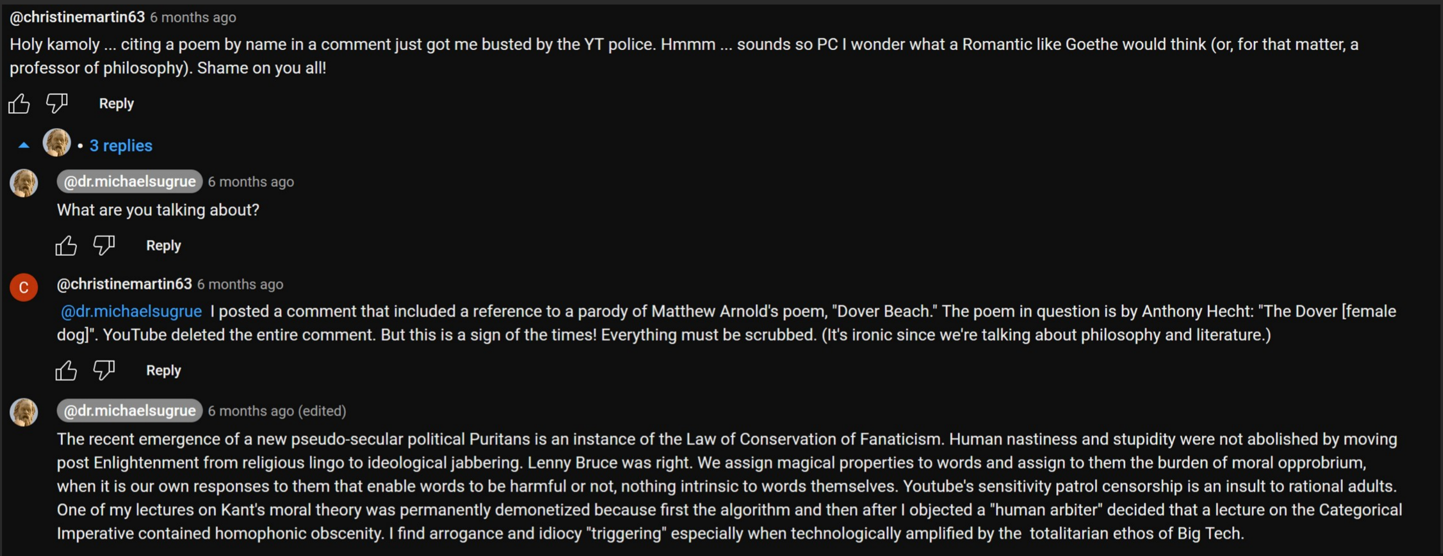
@pygmalioninvenus6057 2 years ago

Dr. Michael Sugrue, your suits don't fit correctly. You should get a tailor.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said the clothes are perfect, his body is wrong.

Goethe, Faust



@christinemartin63 6 months ago

Holy kamoly ... citing a poem by name in a comment just got me busted by the YT police. Hmmm ... sounds so PC I wonder what a Romantic like Goethe would think (or, for that matter, a professor of philosophy). Shame on you all!

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

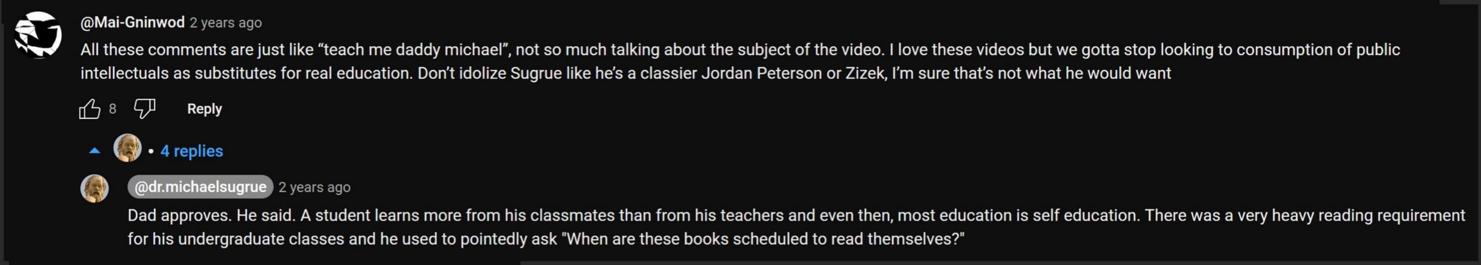
What are you talking about?

@christinemartin63 6 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I posted a comment that included a reference to a parody of Matthew Arnold's poem, "Dover Beach." The poem in question is by Anthony Hecht: "The Dover [female dog]". YouTube deleted the entire comment. But this is a sign of the times! Everything must be scrubbed. (It's ironic since we're talking about philosophy and literature.)

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago (edited)

The recent emergence of a new pseudo-secular political Puritans is an instance of the Law of Conservation of Fanaticism. Human nastiness and stupidity were not abolished by moving post Enlightenment from religious lingo to ideological jabbering. Lenny Bruce was right. We assign magical properties to words and assign to them the burden of moral opprobrium, when it is our own responses to them that enable words to be harmful or not, nothing intrinsic to words themselves. Youtube's sensitivity patrol censorship is an insult to rational adults. One of my lectures on Kant's moral theory was permanently demonetized because first the algorithm and then after I objected a "human arbiter" decided that a lecture on the Categorical Imperative contained homophonic obscenity. I find arrogance and idiocy "triggering" especially when technologically amplified by the totalitarian ethos of Big Tech.

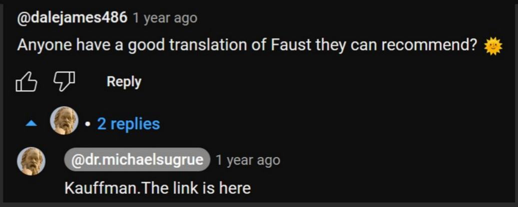


@Mai-Gninwod 2 years ago

All these comments are just like “teach me daddy michael”, not so much talking about the subject of the video. I love these videos but we gotta stop looking to consumption of public intellectuals as substitutes for real education. Don’t idolize Sugrue like he’s a classier Jordan Peterson or Zizek, I’m sure that’s not what he would want

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad approves. He said. A student learns more from his classmates than from his teachers and even then, most education is self education. There was a very heavy reading requirement for his undergraduate classes and he used to pointedly ask "When are these books scheduled to read themselves?"



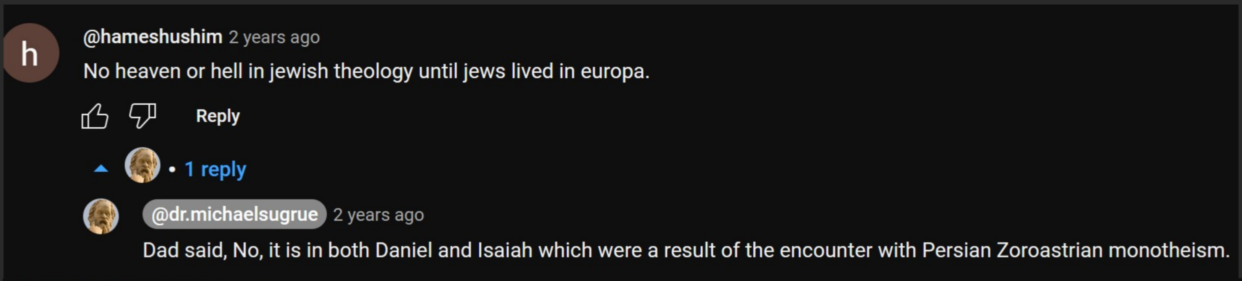
@dalejames486 1 year ago

Anyone have a good translation of Faust they can recommend? 🌞

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Kauffman.The link is here

Introduction to the Problems and Scope of Philosophy

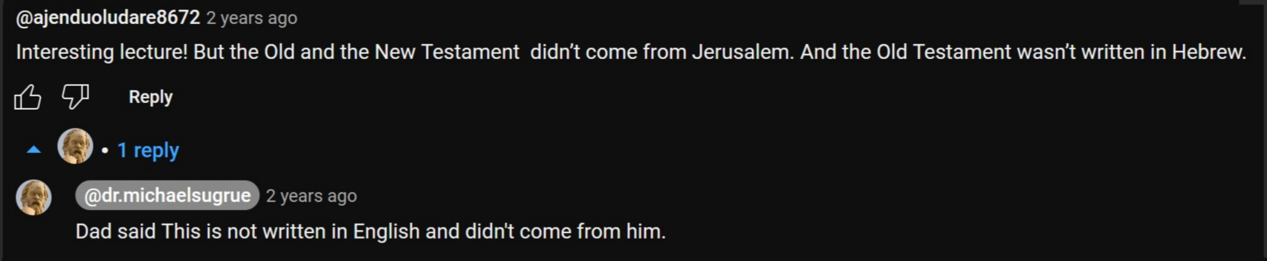


@hameshushim 2 years ago

No heaven or hell in jewish theology until jews lived in europa.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, No, it is in both Daniel and Isaiah which were a result of the encounter with Persian Zoroastrian monotheism.

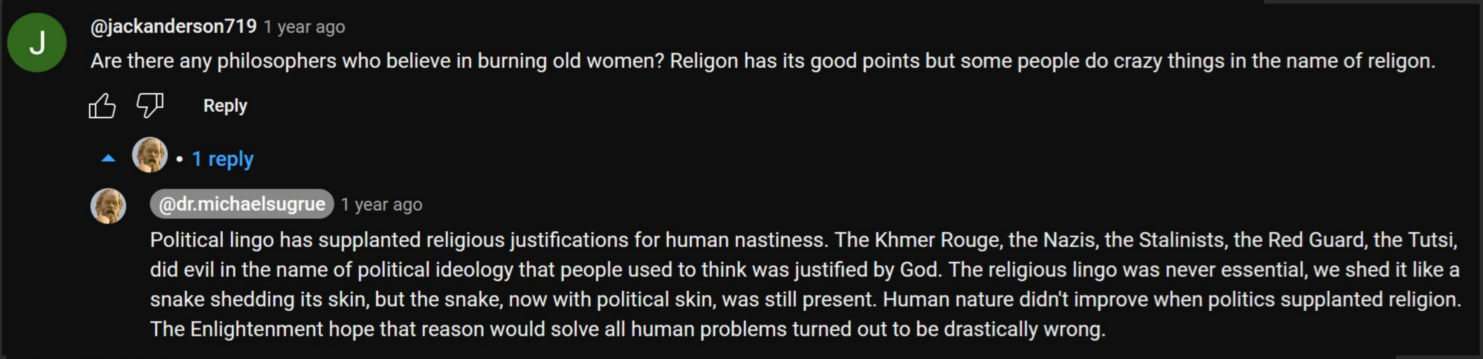


@ajenduoludare8672 2 years ago

Interesting lecture! But the Old and the New Testament didn't come from Jerusalem. And the Old Testament wasn't written in Hebrew.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said This is not written in English and didn't come from him.

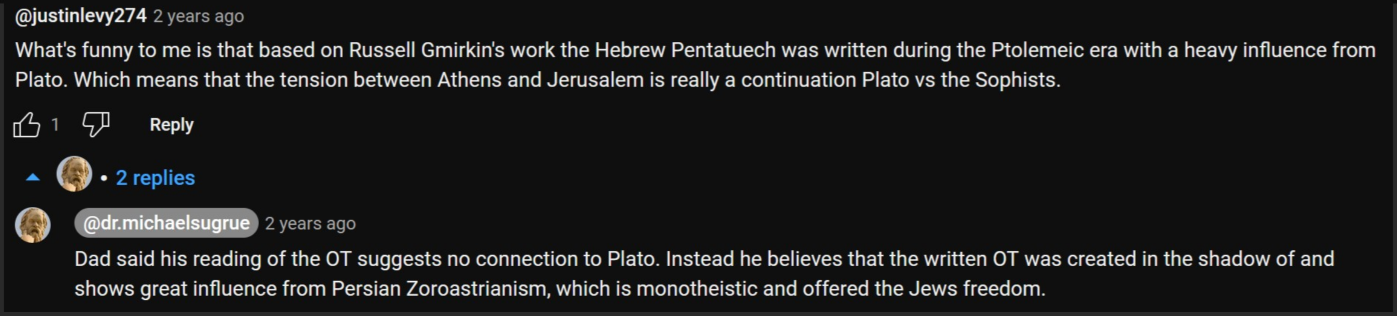


@jackanderson719 1 year ago

Are there any philosophers who believe in burning old women? Religon has its good points but some people do crazy things in the name of religon.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Political lingo has supplanted religious justifications for human nastiness. The Khmer Rouge, the Nazis, the Stalinists, the Red Guard, the Tutsi, did evil in the name of political ideology that people used to think was justified by God. The religious lingo was never essential, we shed it like a snake shedding its skin, but the snake, now with political skin, was still present. Human nature didn't improve when politics supplanted religion. The Enlightenment hope that reason would solve all human problems turned out to be drastically wrong.



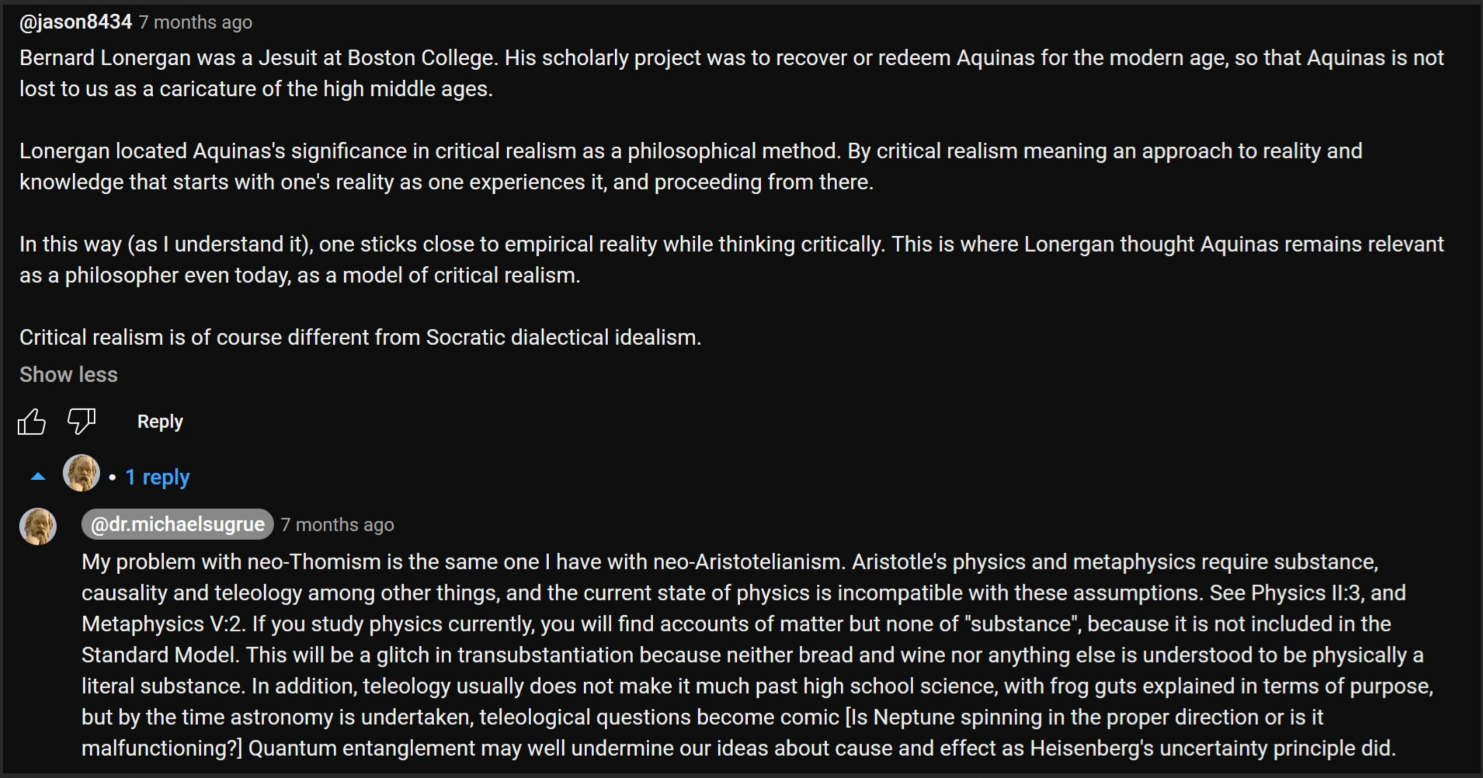
@justinlevy274 2 years ago

What's funny to me is that based on Russell Gmirkin's work the Hebrew Pentatuech was written during the Ptolemeic era with a heavy influence from Plato. Which means that the tension between Athens and Jerusalem is really a continuation Plato vs the Sophists.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said his reading of the OT suggests no connection to Plato. Instead he believes that the written OT was created in the shadow of and shows great influence from Persian Zoroastrianism, which is monotheistic and offered the Jews freedom.

Aquinas' Summa Theologica: The Thomist Synthesis and its Political and Social Content



@jason8434 7 months ago

Bernard Lonergan was a Jesuit at Boston College. His scholarly project was to recover or redeem Aquinas for the modern age, so that Aquinas is not lost to us as a caricature of the high middle ages.

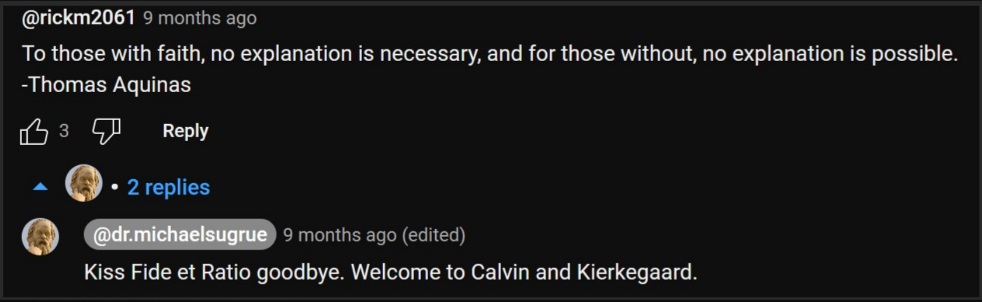
Lonergan located Aquinas's significance in critical realism as a philosophical method. By critical realism meaning an approach to reality and knowledge that starts with one's reality as one experiences it, and proceeding from there.

In this way (as I understand it), one sticks close to empirical reality while thinking critically. This is where Lonergan thought Aquinas remains relevant as a philosopher even today, as a model of critical realism.

Critical realism is of course different from Socratic dialectical idealism.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

My problem with neo-Thomism is the same one I have with neo-Aristotelianism. Aristotle's physics and metaphysics require substance, causality and teleology among other things, and the current state of physics is incompatible with these assumptions. See Physics II:3, and Metaphysics V:2. If you study physics currently, you will find accounts of matter but none of "substance", because it is not included in the Standard Model. This will be a glitch in transubstantiation because neither bread and wine nor anything else is understood to be physically a literal substance. In addition, teleology usually does not make it much past high school science, with frog guts explained in terms of purpose, but by the time astronomy is undertaken, teleological questions become comic [Is Neptune spinning in the proper direction or is it malfunctioning?] Quantum entanglement may well undermine our ideas about cause and effect as Heisenberg's uncertainty principle did.

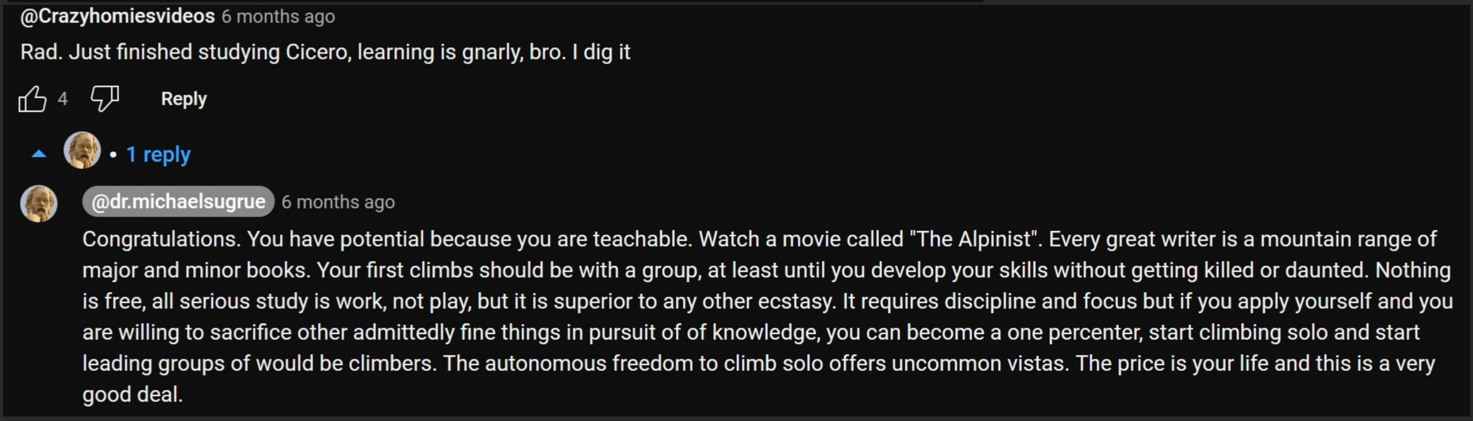


@rickm2061 9 months ago

To those with faith, no explanation is necessary, and for those without, no explanation is possible.
-Thomas Aquinas

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)

Kiss Fide et Ratio goodbye. Welcome to Calvin and Kierkegaard.



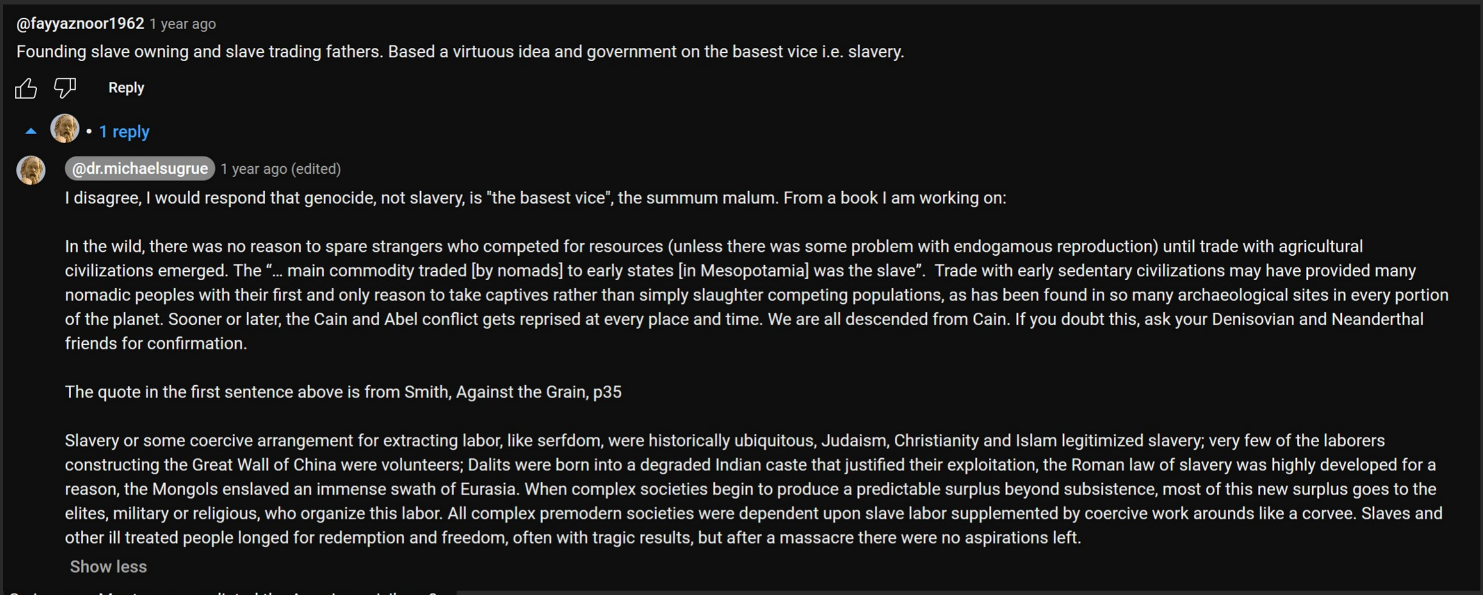
@Crazyhomiesvideos 6 months ago

Rad. Just finished studying Cicero, learning is gnarly, bro. I dig it

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Congratulations. You have potential because you are teachable. Watch a movie called "The Alpinist". Every great writer is a mountain range of major and minor books. Your first climbs should be with a group, at least until you develop your skills without getting killed or daunted. Nothing is free, all serious study is work, not play, but it is superior to any other ecstasy. It requires discipline and focus but if you apply yourself and you are willing to sacrifice other admittedly fine things in pursuit of of knowledge, you can become a one percenter, start climbing solo and start leading groups of would be climbers. The autonomous freedom to climb solo offers uncommon vistas. The price is your life and this is a very good deal.

Montesquieu and the Beginnings of Political Science



@fayyaznoor1962 1 year ago

Founding slave owning and slave trading fathers. Based a virtuous idea and government on the basest vice i.e. slavery.

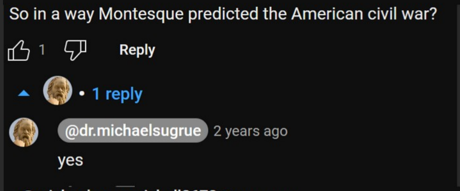
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I disagree, I would respond that genocide, not slavery, is "the basest vice", the summum malum. From a book I am working on:

In the wild, there was no reason to spare strangers who competed for resources (unless there was some problem with endogamous reproduction) until trade with agricultural civilizations emerged. The "... main commodity traded [by nomads] to early states [in Mesopotamia] was the slave". Trade with early sedentary civilizations may have provided many nomadic peoples with their first and only reason to take captives rather than simply slaughter competing populations, as has been found in so many archaeological sites in every portion of the planet. Sooner or later, the Cain and Abel conflict gets reprised at every place and time. We are all descended from Cain. If you doubt this, ask your Denisovian and Neanderthal friends for confirmation.

The quote in the first sentence above is from Smith, Against the Grain, p35

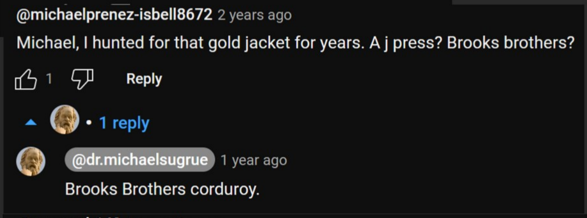
Slavery or some coercive arrangement for extracting labor, like serfdom, were historically ubiquitous, Judaism, Christianity and Islam legitimized slavery; very few of the laborers constructing the Great Wall of China were volunteers; Dalits were born into a degraded Indian caste that justified their exploitation, the Roman law of slavery was highly developed for a reason, the Mongols enslaved an immense swath of Eurasia. When complex societies begin to produce a predictable surplus beyond subsistence, most of this new surplus goes to the elites, military or religious, who organize this labor. All complex premodern societies were dependent upon slave labor supplemented by coercive work arounds like a corvee. Slaves and other ill treated people longed for redemption and freedom, often with tragic results, but after a massacre there were no aspirations left.



So in a way Montesque predicted the American civil war?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

yes

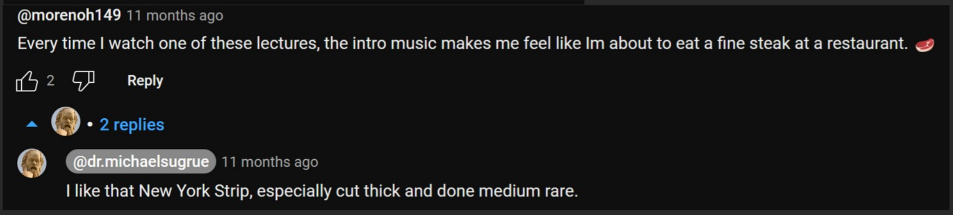


@michaelprenez-isbell8672 2 years ago

Michael, I hunted for that gold jacket for years. A j press? Brooks brothers?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Brooks Brothers corduroy.



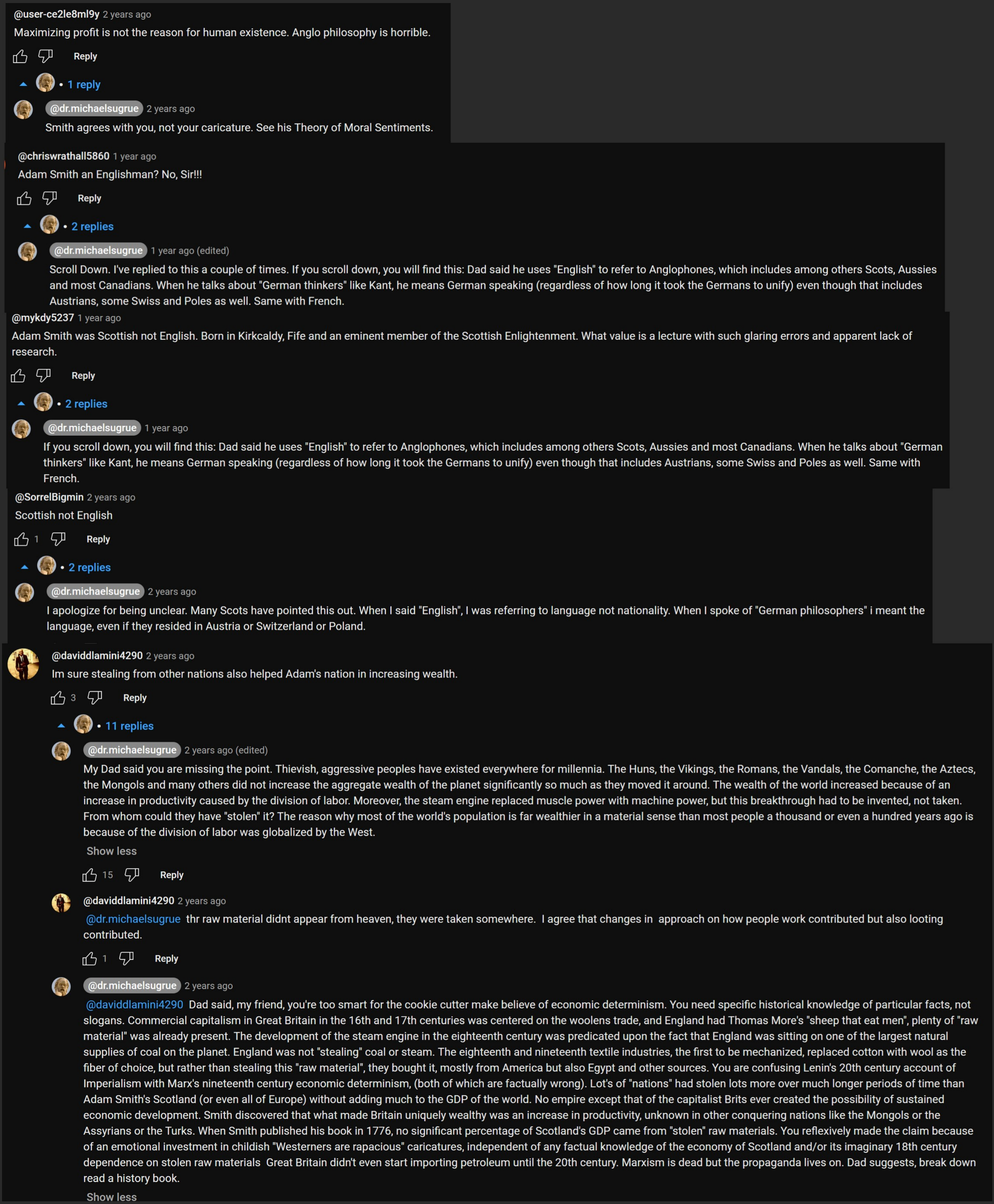
@morenoh149 11 months ago

Every time I watch one of these lectures, the intro music makes me feel like Im about to eat a fine steak at a restaurant. 🥩

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

I like that New York Strip, especially cut thick and done medium rare.

Smith's Wealth of Nations



@user-ce2le8ml9y 2 years ago

Maximizing profit is not the reason for human existence. Anglo philosophy is horrible.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Smith agrees with you, not your caricature. See his Theory of Moral Sentiments.

@chriswrathall5860 1 year ago

Adam Smith an Englishman? No, Sir!!!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Scroll Down. I've replied to this a couple of times. If you scroll down, you will find this: Dad said he uses "English" to refer to Anglophones, which includes among others Scots, Aussies and most Canadians. When he talks about "German thinkers" like Kant, he means German speaking (regardless of how long it took the Germans to unify) even though that includes Austrians, some Swiss and Poles as well. Same with French.

@mykdy5237 1 year ago

Adam Smith was Scottish not English. Born in Kirkcaldy, Fife and an eminent member of the Scottish Enlightenment. What value is a lecture with such glaring errors and apparent lack of research.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

If you scroll down, you will find this: Dad said he uses "English" to refer to Anglophones, which includes among others Scots, Aussies and most Canadians. When he talks about "German thinkers" like Kant, he means German speaking (regardless of how long it took the Germans to unify) even though that includes Austrians, some Swiss and Poles as well. Same with French.

@SorrelBigmin 2 years ago

Scottish not English

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

I apologize for being unclear. Many Scots have pointed this out. When I said "English", I was referring to language not nationality. When I spoke of "German philosophers" i meant the language, even if they resided in Austria or Switzerland or Poland.

@daviddlamini4290 2 years ago

Im sure stealing from other nations also helped Adam's nation in increasing wealth.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

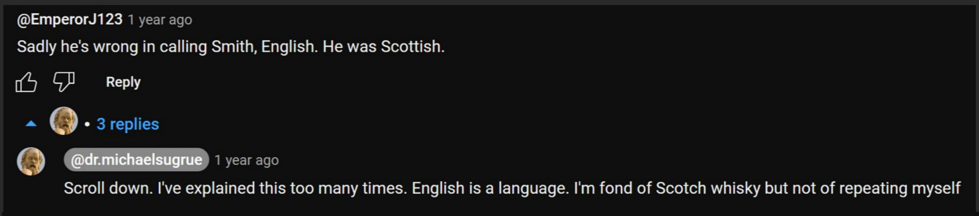
My Dad said you are missing the point. Thievish, aggressive peoples have existed everywhere for millennia. The Huns, the Vikings, the Romans, the Vandals, the Comanche, the Aztecs, the Mongols and many others did not increase the aggregate wealth of the planet significantly so much as they moved it around. The wealth of the world increased because of an increase in productivity caused by the division of labor. Moreover, the steam engine replaced muscle power with machine power, but this breakthrough had to be invented, not taken. From whom could they have "stolen" it? The reason why most of the world's population is far wealthier in a material sense than most people a thousand or even a hundred years ago is because of the division of labor was globalized by the West.

@daviddlamini4290 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue thr raw material didnt appear from heaven, they were taken somewhere. I agree that changes in approach on how people work contributed but also looting contributed.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@daviddlamini4290 Dad said, my friend, you're too smart for the cookie cutter make believe of economic determinism. You need specific historical knowledge of particular facts, not slogans. Commercial capitalism in Great Britain in the 16th and 17th centuries was centered on the woolens trade, and England had Thomas More's "sheep that eat men", plenty of "raw material" was already present. The development of the steam engine in the eighteenth century was predicated upon the fact that England was sitting on one of the largest natural supplies of coal on the planet. England was not "stealing" coal or steam. The eighteenth and nineteenth textile industries, the first to be mechanized, replaced cotton with wool as the fiber of choice, but rather than stealing this "raw material", they bought it, mostly from America but also Egypt and other sources. You are confusing Lenin's 20th century account of Imperialism with Marx's nineteenth century economic determinism, (both of which are factually wrong). Lot's of "nations" had stolen lots more over much longer periods of time than Adam Smith's Scotland (or even all of Europe) without adding much to the GDP of the world. No empire except that of the capitalist Brits ever created the possibility of sustained economic development. Smith discovered that what made Britain uniquely wealthy was an increase in productivity, unknown in other conquering nations like the Mongols or the Assyrians or the Turks. When Smith published his book in 1776, no significant percentage of Scotland's GDP came from "stolen" raw materials. You reflexively made the claim because of an emotional investment in childish "Westerners are rapacious" caricatures, independent of any factual knowledge of the economy of Scotland and/or its imaginary 18th century dependence on stolen raw materials Great Britain didn't even start importing petroleum until the 20th century. Marxism is dead but the propaganda lives on. Dad suggests, break down read a history book.

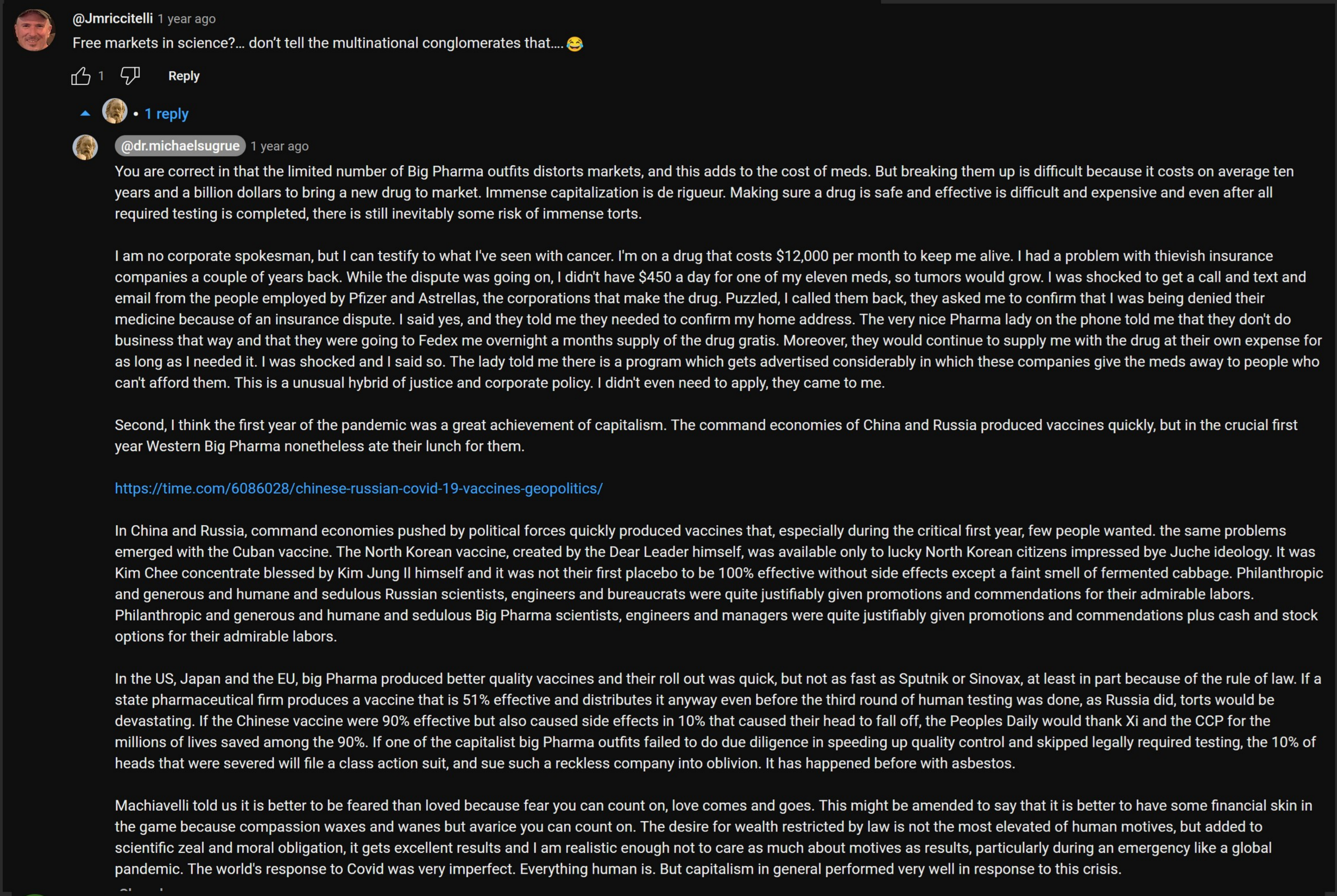


@EmperorJ123 1 year ago

Sadly he's wrong in calling Smith, English. He was Scottish.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Scroll down. I've explained this too many times. English is a language. I'm fond of Scotch whisky but not of repeating myself



@Jmriccitelli 1 year ago

Free markets in science?... don't tell the multinational conglomerates that.... 😂

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are correct in that the limited number of Big Pharma outfits distorts markets, and this adds to the cost of meds. But breaking them up is difficult because it costs on average ten years and a billion dollars to bring a new drug to market. Immense capitalization is de rigueur. Making sure a drug is safe and effective is difficult and expensive and even after all required testing is completed, there is still inevitably some risk of immense torts.

I am no corporate spokesman, but I can testify to what I've seen with cancer. I'm on a drug that costs $12,000 per month to keep me alive. I had a problem with thievish insurance companies a couple of years back. While the dispute was going on, I didn't have $450 a day for one of my eleven meds, so tumors would grow. I was shocked to get a call and text and email from the people employed by Pfizer and Astrellas, the corporations that make the drug. Puzzled, I called them back, they asked me to confirm that I was being denied their medicine because of an insurance dispute. I said yes, and they told me they needed to confirm my home address. The very nice Pharma lady on the phone told me that they don't do business that way and that they were going to Fedex me overnight a months supply of the drug gratis. Moreover, they would continue to supply me with the drug at their own expense for as long as I needed it. I was shocked and I said so. The lady told me there is a program which gets advertised considerably in which these companies give the meds away to people who can't afford them. This is a unusual hybrid of justice and corporate policy. I didn't even need to apply, they came to me.

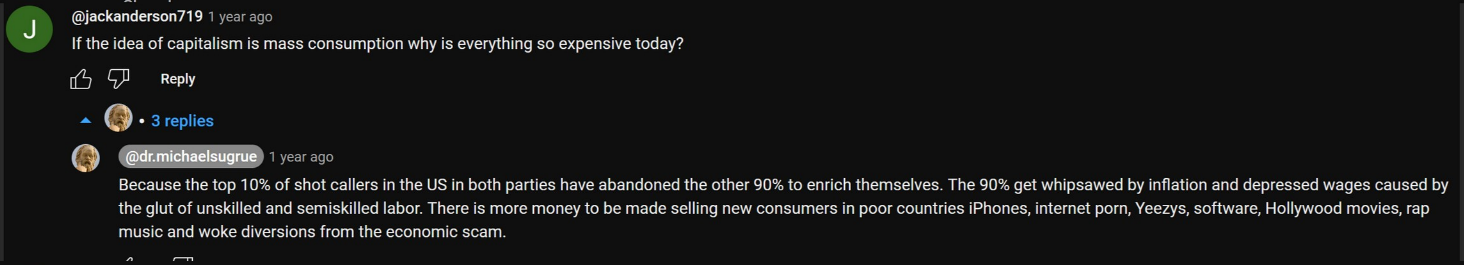
Second, I think the first year of the pandemic was a great achievement of capitalism. The command economies of China and Russia produced vaccines quickly, but in the crucial first year Western Big Pharma nonetheless ate their lunch for them.

https://time.com/6086028/chinese-russian-covid-19-vaccines-geopolitics/

In China and Russia, command economies pushed by political forces quickly produced vaccines that, especially during the critical first year, few people wanted. the same problems emerged with the Cuban vaccine. The North Korean vaccine, created by the Dear Leader himself, was available only to lucky North Korean citizens impressed bye Juche ideology. It was Kim Chee concentrate blessed by Kim Jung Il himself and it was not their first placebo to be 100% effective without side effects except a faint smell of fermented cabbage. Philanthropic and generous and humane and sedulous Russian scientists, engineers and bureaucrats were quite justifiably given promotions and commendations for their admirable labors. Philanthropic and generous and humane and sedulous Big Pharma scientists, engineers and managers were quite justifiably given promotions and commendations plus cash and stock options for their admirable labors.

In the US, Japan and the EU, big Pharma produced better quality vaccines and their roll out was quick, but not as fast as Sputnik or Sinovax, at least in part because of the rule of law. If a state pharmaceutical firm produces a vaccine that is 51% effective and distributes it anyway even before the third round of human testing was done, as Russia did, torts would be devastating. If the Chinese vaccine were 90% effective but also caused side effects in 10% that caused their head to fall off, the Peoples Daily would thank Xi and the CCP for the millions of lives saved among the 90%. If one of the capitalist big Pharma outfits failed to do due diligence in speeding up quality control and skipped legally required testing, the 10% of heads that were severed will file a class action suit, and sue such a reckless company into oblivion. It has happened before with asbestos.

Machiavelli told us it is better to be feared than loved because fear you can count on, love comes and goes. This might be amended to say that it is better to have some financial skin in the game because compassion waxes and wanes but avarice you can count on. The desire for wealth restricted by law is not the most elevated of human motives, but added to scientific zeal and moral obligation, it gets excellent results and I am realistic enough not to care as much about motives as results, particularly during an emergency like a global pandemic. The world's response to Covid was very imperfect. Everything human is. But capitalism in general performed very well in response to this crisis.

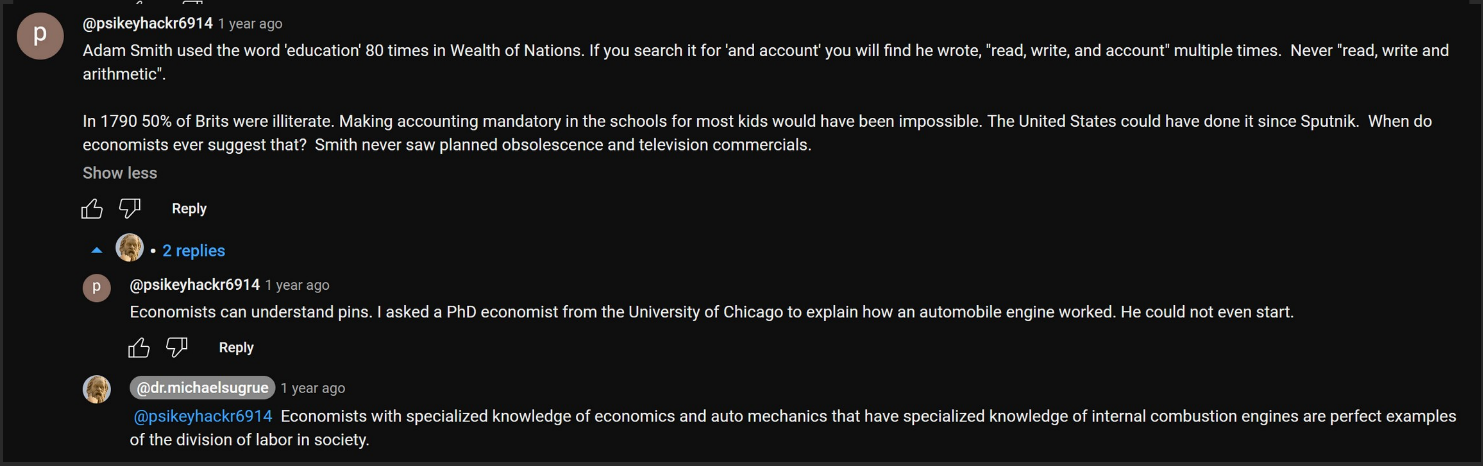


@jackanderson719 1 year ago

If the idea of capitalism is mass consumption why is everything so expensive today?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Because the top 10% of shot callers in the US in both parties have abandoned the other 90% to enrich themselves. The 90% get whipsawed by inflation and depressed wages caused by the glut of unskilled and semiskilled labor. There is more money to be made selling new consumers in poor countries iPhones, internet porn, Yeezys, software, Hollywood movies, rap music and woke diversions from the economic scam.



@psikeyhackr6914 1 year ago

Adam Smith used the word 'education' 80 times in Wealth of Nations. If you search it for 'and account' you will find he wrote, "read, write, and account" multiple times. Never "read, write and arithmetic".

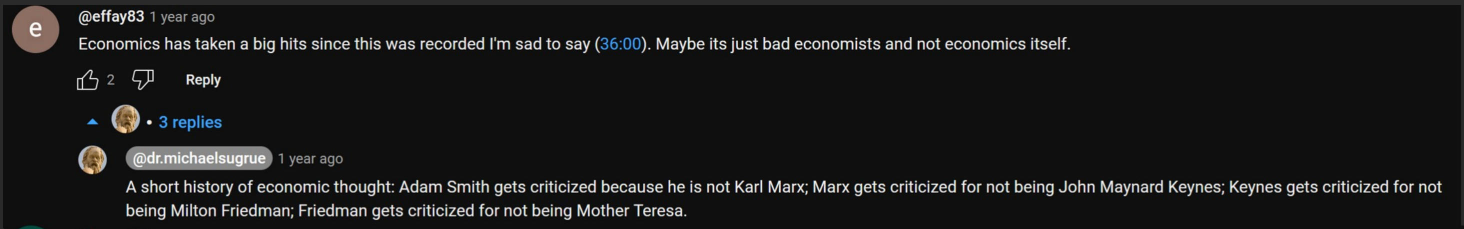
In 1790 50% of Brits were illiterate. Making accounting mandatory in the schools for most kids would have been impossible. The United States could have done it since Sputnik. When do economists ever suggest that? Smith never saw planned obsolescence and television commercials.

@psikeyhackr6914 1 year ago

Economists can understand pins. I asked a PhD economist from the University of Chicago to explain how an automobile engine worked. He could not even start.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@psikeyhackr6914 Economists with specialized knowledge of economics and auto mechanics that have specialized knowledge of internal combustion engines are perfect examples of the division of labor in society.

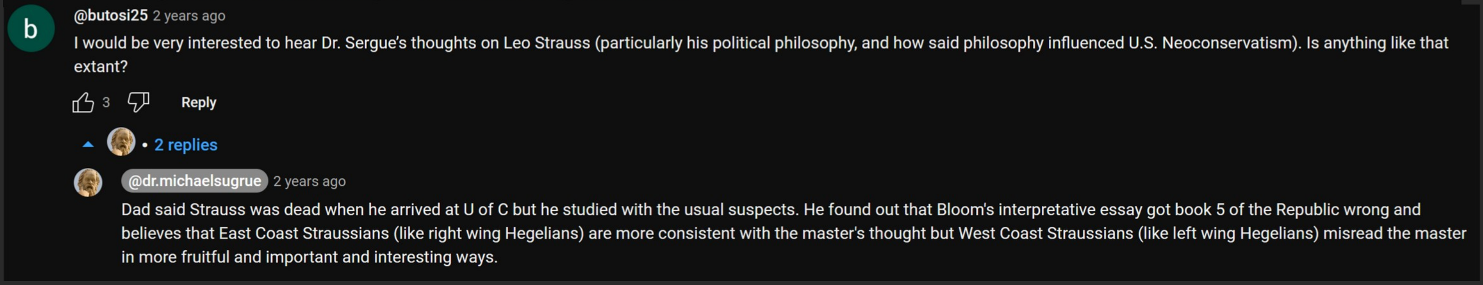


@effay83 1 year ago

Economics has taken a big hits since this was recorded I'm sad to say (36:00). Maybe its just bad economists and not economics itself.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A short history of economic thought: Adam Smith gets criticized because he is not Karl Marx; Marx gets criticized for not being John Maynard Keynes; Keynes gets criticized for not being Milton Friedman; Friedman gets criticized for not being Mother Teresa.



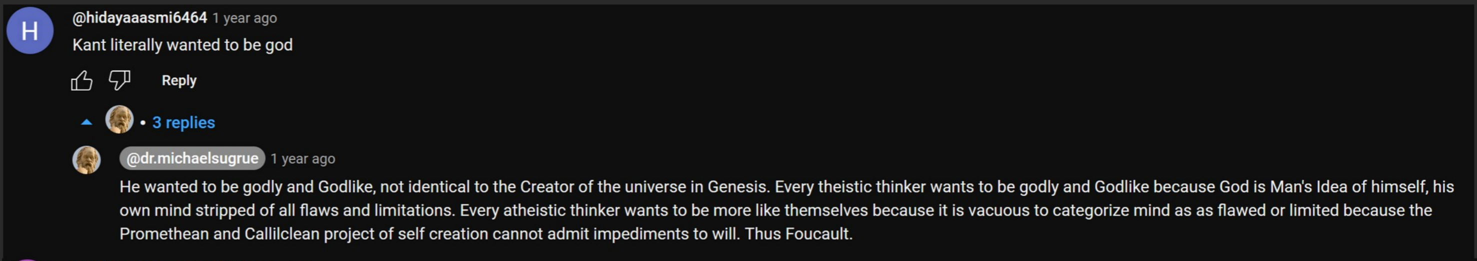
@butosi25 2 years ago

I would be very interested to hear Dr. Sergue's thoughts on Leo Strauss (particularly his political philosophy, and how said philosophy influenced U.S. Neoconservatism). Is anything like that extant?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said Strauss was dead when he arrived at U of C but he studied with the usual suspects. He found out that Bloom's interpretative essay got book 5 of the Republic wrong and believes that East Coast Straussians (like right wing Hegelians) are more consistent with the master's thought but West Coast Straussians (like left wing Hegelians) misread the master in more fruitful and important and interesting ways.

Kant's Moral Philosophy

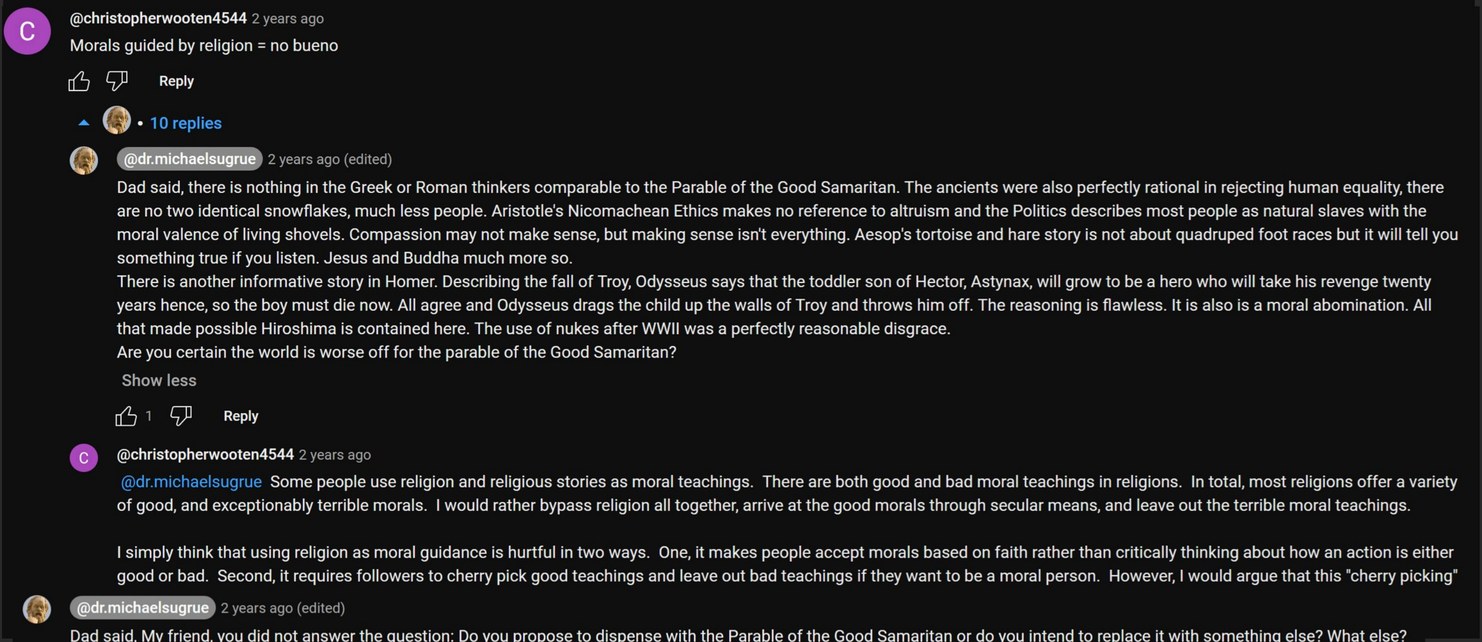


@hidayaaasmi6464 1 year ago

Kant literally wanted to be god

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

He wanted to be godly and Godlike, not identical to the Creator of the universe in Genesis. Every theistic thinker wants to be godly and Godlike because God is Man's Idea of himself, his own mind stripped of all flaws and limitations. Every atheistic thinker wants to be more like themselves because it is vacuous to categorize mind as as flawed or limited because the Promethean and Callilclean project of self creation cannot admit impediments to will. Thus Foucault.



@christopherwooten4544 2 years ago

Morals guided by religion = no bueno

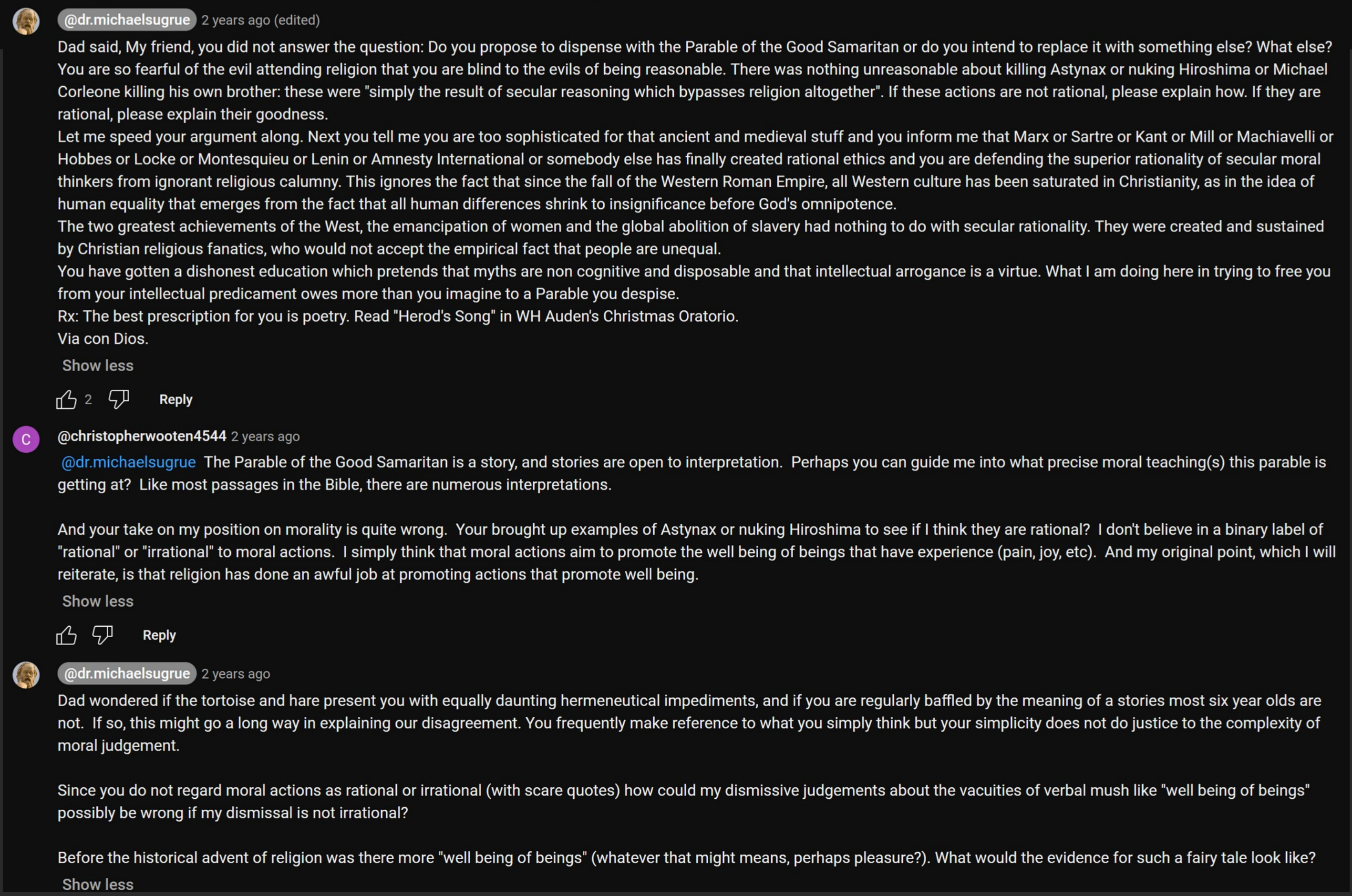
@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, there is nothing in the Greek or Roman thinkers comparable to the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The ancients were also perfectly rational in rejecting human equality, there are no two identical snowflakes, much less people. Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics makes no reference to altruism and the Politics describes most people as natural slaves with the moral valence of living shovels. Compassion may not make sense, but making sense isn't everything. Aesop's tortoise and hare story is not about quadruped foot races but it will tell you something true if you listen. Jesus and Buddha much more so.
There is another informative story in Homer. Describing the fall of Troy, Odysseus says that the toddler son of Hector, Astynax, will grow to be a hero who will take his revenge twenty years hence, so the boy must die now. All agree and Odysseus drags the child up the walls of Troy and throws him off. The reasoning is flawless. It is also is a moral abomination. All that made possible Hiroshima is contained here. The use of nukes after WWII was a perfectly reasonable disgrace.
Are you certain the world is worse off for the parable of the Good Samaritan?

@christopherwooten4544 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Some people use religion and religious stories as moral teachings. There are both good and bad moral teachings in religions. In total, most religions offer a variety of good, and exceptionably terrible morals. I would rather bypass religion all together, arrive at the good morals through secular means, and leave out the terrible moral teachings.

I simply think that using religion as moral guidance is hurtful in two ways. One, it makes people accept morals based on faith rather than critically thinking about how an action is either good or bad. Second, it requires followers to cherry pick good teachings and leave out bad teachings if they want to be a moral person. However, I would argue that this "cherry picking"



@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, My friend, you did not answer the question: Do you propose to dispense with the Parable of the Good Samaritan or do you intend to replace it with something else? What else? You are so fearful of the evil attending religion that you are blind to the evils of being reasonable. There was nothing unreasonable about killing Astynax or nuking Hiroshima or Michael Corleone killing his own brother: these were "simply the result of secular reasoning which bypasses religion altogether". If these actions are not rational, please explain how. If they are rational, please explain their goodness.
Let me speed your argument along. Next you tell me you are too sophisticated for that ancient and medieval stuff and you inform me that Marx or Sartre or Kant or Mill or Machiavelli or Hobbes or Locke or Montesquieu or Lenin or Amnesty International or somebody else has finally created rational ethics and you are defending the superior rationality of secular moral thinkers from ignorant religious calumny. This ignores the fact that since the fall of the Western Roman Empire, all Western culture has been saturated in Christianity, as in the idea of human equality that emerges from the fact that all human differences shrink to insignificance before God's omnipotence.
The two greatest achievements of the West, the emancipation of women and the global abolition of slavery had nothing to do with secular rationality. They were created and sustained by Christian religious fanatics, who would not accept the empirical fact that people are unequal.
You have gotten a dishonest education which pretends that myths are non cognitive and disposable and that intellectual arrogance is a virtue. What I am doing here in trying to free you from your intellectual predicament owes more than you imagine to a Parable you despise.
Rx: The best prescription for you is poetry. Read "Herod's Song" in WH Auden's Christmas Oratorio.
Via con Dios.

@christopherwooten4544 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue The Parable of the Good Samaritan is a story, and stories are open to interpretation. Perhaps you can guide me into what precise moral teaching(s) this parable is getting at? Like most passages in the Bible, there are numerous interpretations.

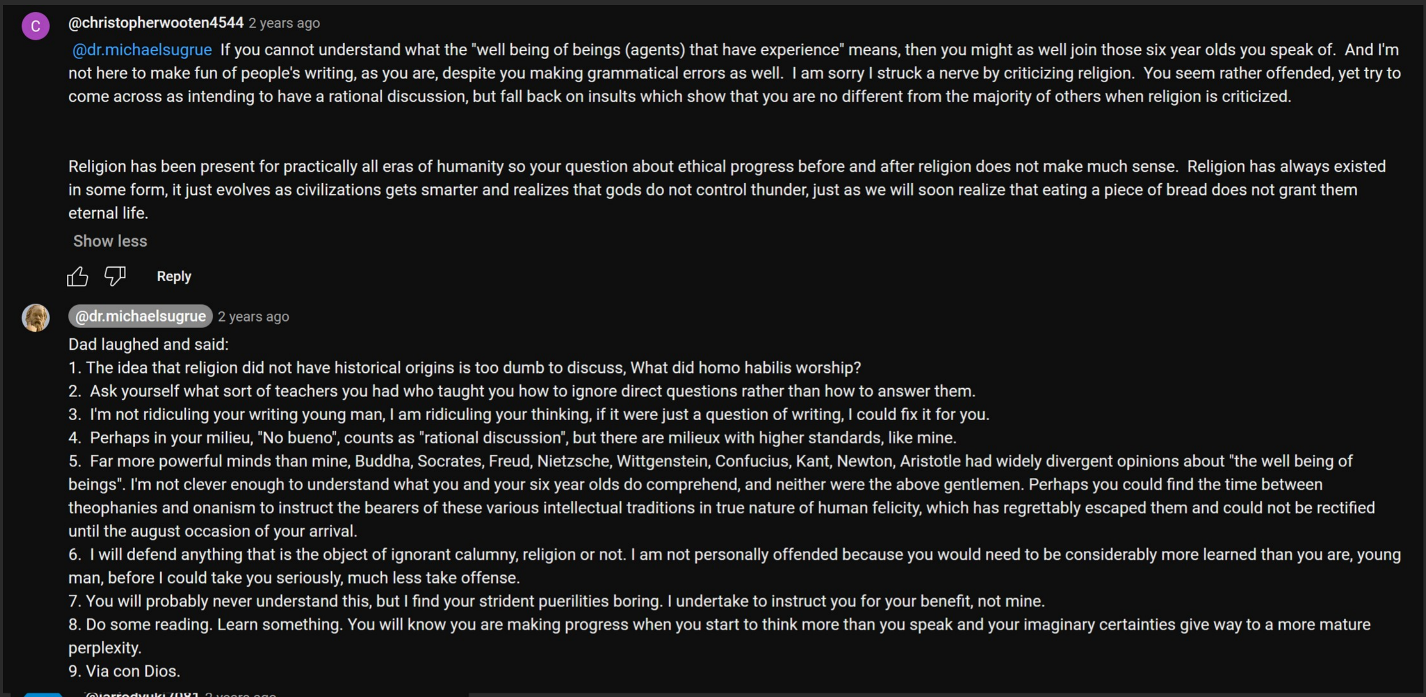
And your take on my position on morality is quite wrong. Your brought up examples of Astynax or nuking Hiroshima to see if I think they are rational? I don't believe in a binary label of "rational" or "irrational" to moral actions. I simply think that moral actions aim to promote the well being of beings that have experience (pain, joy, etc). And my original point, which I will reiterate, is that religion has done an awful job at promoting actions that promote well being.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad wondered if the tortoise and hare present you with equally daunting hermeneutical impediments, and if you are regularly baffled by the meaning of a stories most six year olds are not. If so, this might go a long way in explaining our disagreement. You frequently make reference to what you simply think but your simplicity does not do justice to the complexity of moral judgement.

Since you do not regard moral actions as rational or irrational (with scare quotes) how could my dismissive judgements about the vacuities of verbal mush like "well being of beings" possibly be wrong if my dismissal is not irrational?

Before the historical advent of religion was there more "well being of beings" (whatever that might means, perhaps pleasure?). What would the evidence for such a fairy tale look like?



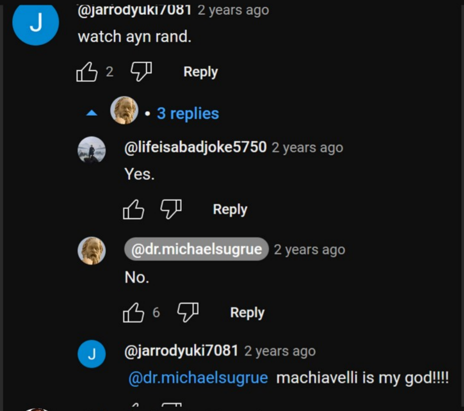
@christopherwooten4544 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue If you cannot understand what the "well being of beings (agents) that have experience" means, then you might as well join those six year olds you speak of. And I'm not here to make fun of people's writing, as you are, despite you making grammatical errors as well. I am sorry I struck a nerve by criticizing religion. You seem rather offended, yet try to come across as intending to have a rational discussion, but fall back on insults which show that you are no different from the majority of others when religion is criticized.

Religion has been present for practically all eras of humanity so your question about ethical progress before and after religion does not make much sense. Religion has always existed in some form, it just evolves as civilizations gets smarter and realizes that gods do not control thunder, just as we will soon realize that eating a piece of bread does not grant them eternal life.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed and said:
1. The idea that religion did not have historical origins is too dumb to discuss, What did homo habilis worship?
2. Ask yourself what sort of teachers you had who taught you how to ignore direct questions rather than how to answer them.
3. I'm not ridiculing your writing young man, I am ridiculing your thinking, if it were just a question of writing, I could fix it for you.
4. Perhaps in your milieu, "No bueno", counts as "rational discussion", but there are milieux with higher standards, like mine.
5. Far more powerful minds than mine, Buddha, Socrates, Freud, Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, Confucius, Kant, Newton, Aristotle had widely divergent opinions about "the well being of beings". I'm not clever enough to understand what you and your six year olds do comprehend, and neither were the above gentlemen. Perhaps you could find the time between theophanies and onanism to instruct the bearers of these various intellectual traditions in true nature of human felicity, which has regrettably escaped them and could not be rectified until the august occasion of your arrival.
6. I will defend anything that is the object of ignorant calumny, religion or not. I am not personally offended because you would need to be considerably more learned than you are, young man, before I could take you seriously, much less take offense.
7. You will probably never understand this, but I find your strident puerilities boring. I undertake to instruct you for your benefit, not mine.
8. Do some reading. Learn something. You will know you are making progress when you start to think more than you speak and your imaginary certainties give way to a more mature perplexity.
9. Via con Dios.



@jarrodyuki7081 2 years ago

watch ayn rand.

@lifeisabadjoke5750 2 years ago

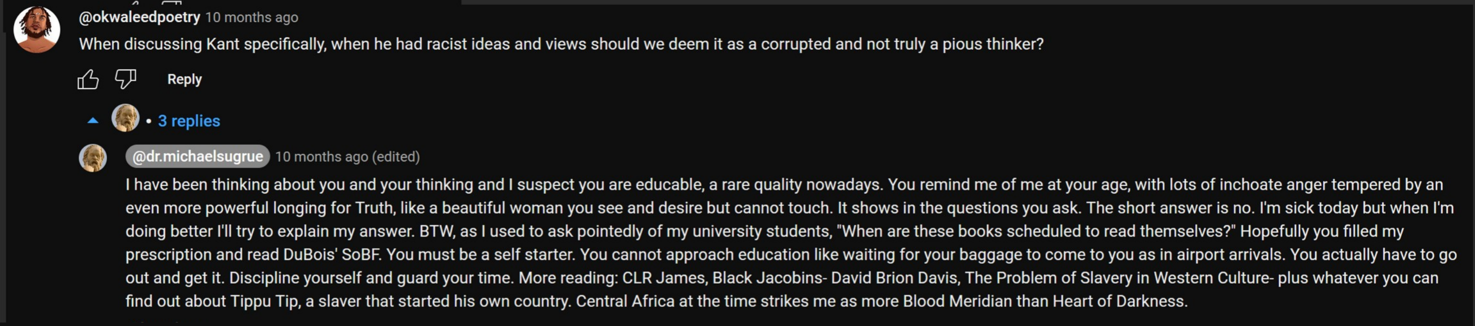
Yes.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

No.

@jarrodyuki7081 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue machiavelli is my god!!!!

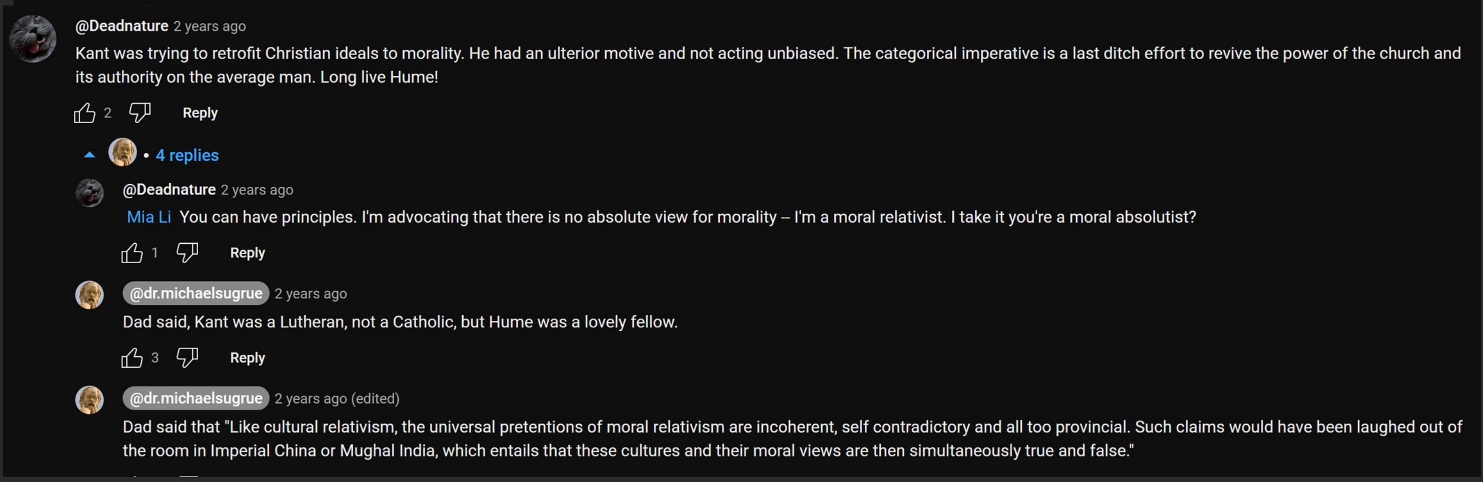


@okwaleedpoetry 10 months ago

When discussing Kant specifically, when he had racist ideas and views should we deem it as a corrupted and not truly a pious thinker?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

I have been thinking about you and your thinking and I suspect you are educable, a rare quality nowadays. You remind me of me at your age, with lots of inchoate anger tempered by an even more powerful longing for Truth, like a beautiful woman you see and desire but cannot touch. It shows in the questions you ask. The short answer is no. I'm sick today but when I'm doing better I'll try to explain my answer. BTW, as I used to ask pointedly of my university students, "When are these books scheduled to read themselves?" Hopefully you filled my prescription and read DuBois' SoBF. You must be a self starter. You cannot approach education like waiting for your baggage to come to you as in airport arrivals. You actually have to go out and get it. Discipline yourself and guard your time. More reading: CLR James, Black Jacobins- David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture- plus whatever you can find out about Tippu Tip, a slaver that started his own country. Central Africa at the time strikes me as more Blood Meridian than Heart of Darkness.



@Deadnature 2 years ago

Kant was trying to retrofit Christian ideals to morality. He had an ulterior motive and not acting unbiased. The categorical imperative is a last ditch effort to revive the power of the church and its authority on the average man. Long live Hume!

@Deadnature 2 years ago

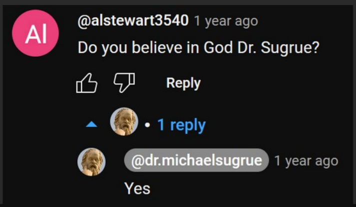
Mia Li You can have principles. I'm advocating that there is no absolute view for morality -- I'm a moral relativist. I take it you're a moral absolutist?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Kant was a Lutheran, not a Catholic, but Hume was a lovely fellow.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said that "Like cultural relativism, the universal pretentions of moral relativism are incoherent, self contradictory and all too provincial. Such claims would have been laughed out of the room in Imperial China or Mughal India, which entails that these cultures and their moral views are then simultaneously true and false."

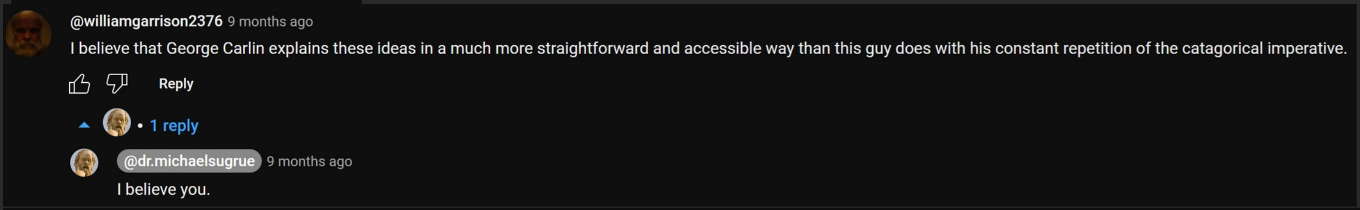


@alstewart3540 1 year ago

Do you believe in God Dr. Sugrue?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes

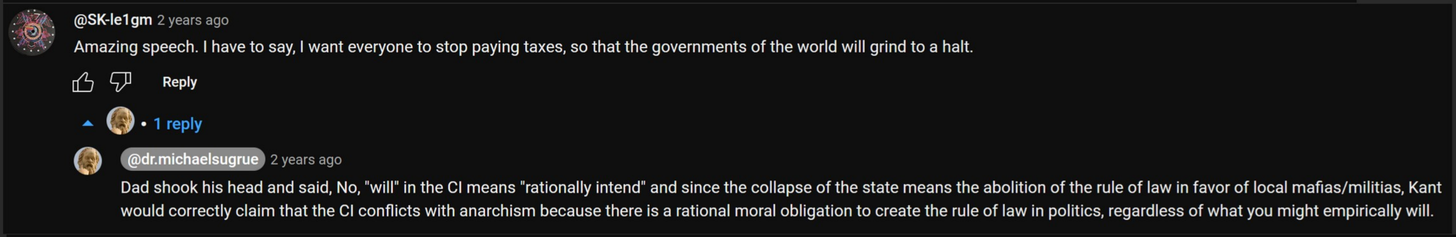


@williamgarrison2376 9 months ago

I believe that George Carlin explains these ideas in a much more straightforward and accessible way than this guy does with his constant repetition of the catagorical imperative.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

I believe you.

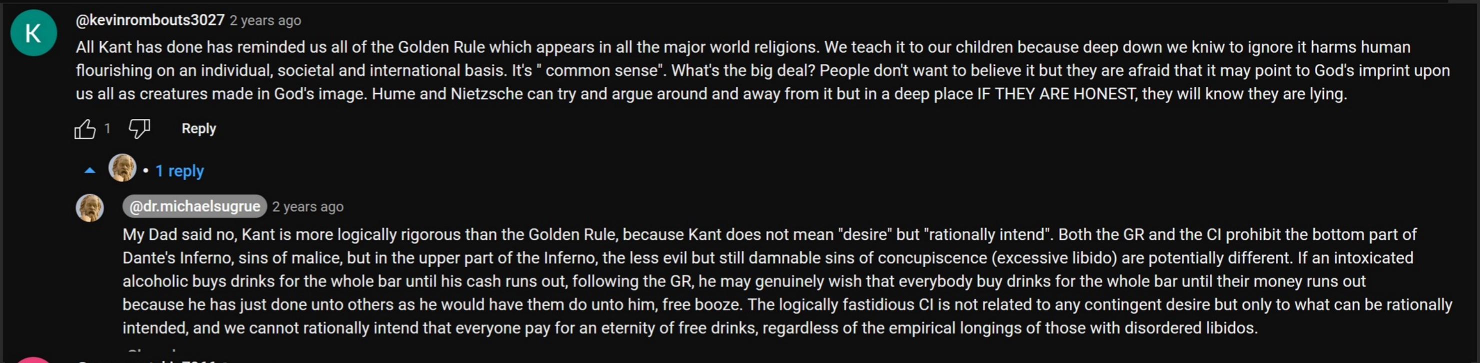


@SK-le1gm 2 years ago

Amazing speech. I have to say, I want everyone to stop paying taxes, so that the governments of the world will grind to a halt.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad shook his head and said, No, "will" in the CI means "rationally intend" and since the collapse of the state means the abolition of the rule of law in favor of local mafias/militias, Kant would correctly claim that the CI conflicts with anarchism because there is a rational moral obligation to create the rule of law in politics, regardless of what you might empirically will.

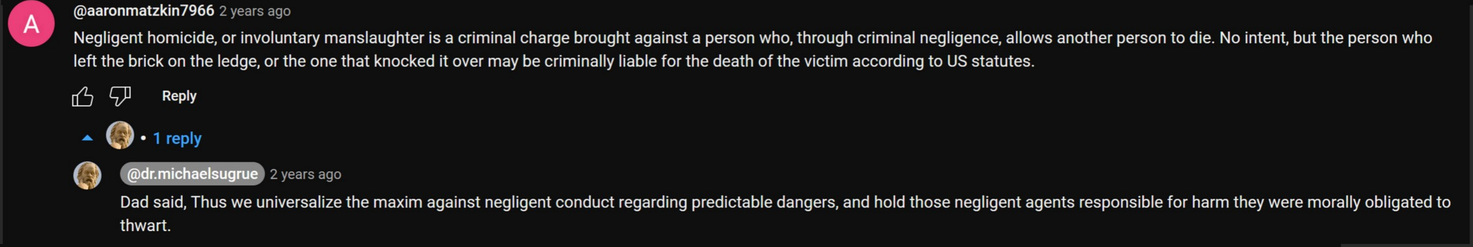


@kevinrombouts3027 2 years ago

All Kant has done has reminded us all of the Golden Rule which appears in all the major world religions. We teach it to our children because deep down we kniw to ignore it harms human flourishing on an individual, societal and international basis. It's " common sense". What's the big deal? People don't want to believe it but they are afraid that it may point to God's imprint upon us all as creatures made in God's image. Hume and Nietzsche can try and argue around and away from it but in a deep place IF THEY ARE HONEST, they will know they are lying.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

My Dad said no, Kant is more logically rigorous than the Golden Rule, because Kant does not mean "desire" but "rationally intend". Both the GR and the CI prohibit the bottom part of Dante's Inferno, sins of malice, but in the upper part of the Inferno, the less evil but still damnable sins of concupiscence (excessive libido) are potentially different. If an intoxicated alcoholic buys drinks for the whole bar until his cash runs out, following the GR, he may genuinely wish that everybody buy drinks for the whole bar until their money runs out because he has just done unto others as he would have them do unto him, free booze. The logically fastidious CI is not related to any contingent desire but only to what can be rationally intended, and we cannot rationally intend that everyone pay for an eternity of free drinks, regardless of the empirical longings of those with disordered libidos.

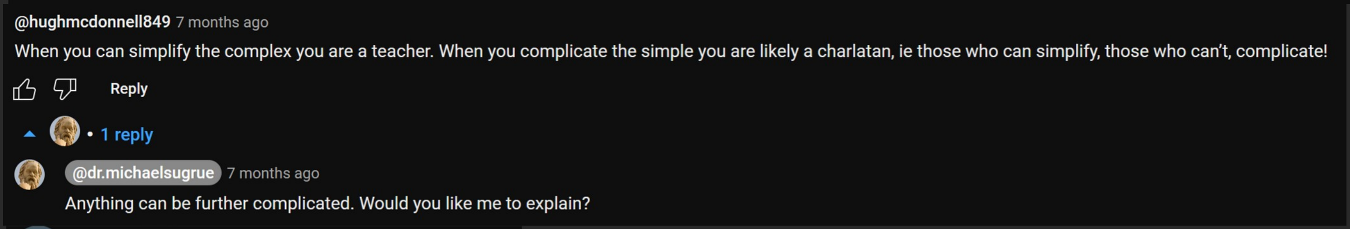


@aaronmatzkin7966 2 years ago

Negligent homicide, or involuntary manslaughter is a criminal charge brought against a person who, through criminal negligence, allows another person to die. No intent, but the person who left the brick on the ledge, or the one that knocked it over may be criminally liable for the death of the victim according to US statutes.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Thus we universalize the maxim against negligent conduct regarding predictable dangers, and hold those negligent agents responsible for harm they were morally obligated to thwart.

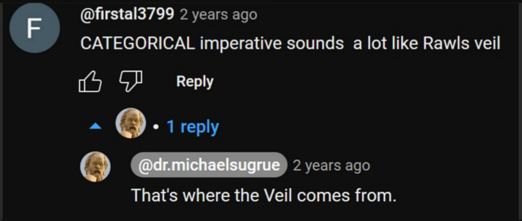


@hughmcdonnell849 7 months ago

When you can simplify the complex you are a teacher. When you complicate the simple you are likely a charlatan, ie those who can simplify, those who can't, complicate!

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Anything can be further complicated. Would you like me to explain?

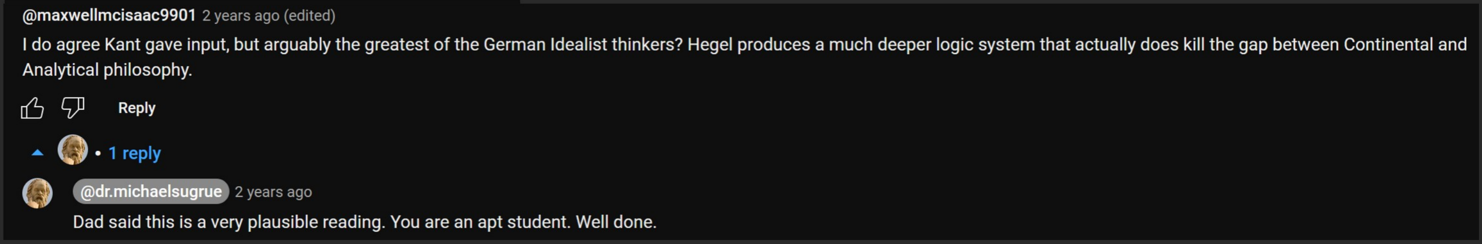


@firstal3799 2 years ago

CATEGORICAL imperative sounds a lot like Rawls veil

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

That's where the Veil comes from.

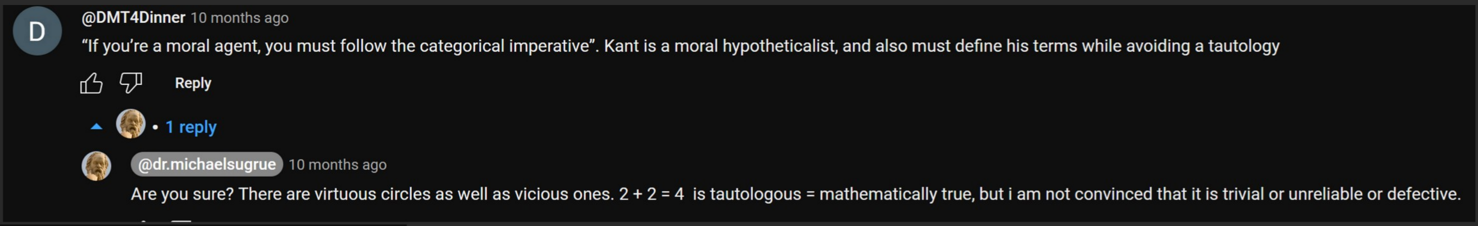


@maxwellmcisaac9901 2 years ago (edited)

I do agree Kant gave input, but arguably the greatest of the German Idealist thinkers? Hegel produces a much deeper logic system that actually does kill the gap between Continental and Analytical philosophy.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said this is a very plausible reading. You are an apt student. Well done.

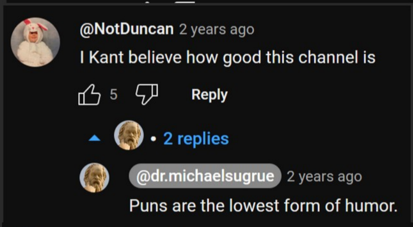


@DMT4Dinner 10 months ago

“If you’re a moral agent, you must follow the categorical imperative”. Kant is a moral hypotheticalist, and also must define his terms while avoiding a tautology

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Are you sure? There are virtuous circles as well as vicious ones. 2 + 2 = 4 is tautologous = mathematically true, but i am not convinced that it is trivial or unreliable or defective.

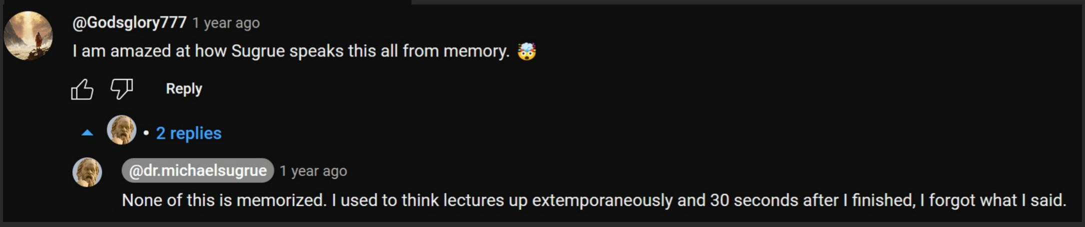


@NotDuncan 2 years ago

I Kant believe how good this channel is

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Puns are the lowest form of humor.



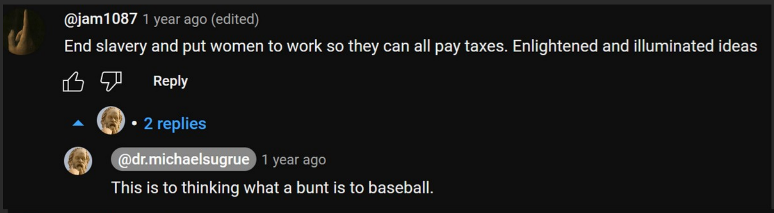
@Godsglory777 1 year ago

I am amazed at how Sugrue speaks this all from memory. 🤯

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

None of this is memorized. I used to think lectures up extemporaneously and 30 seconds after I finished, I forgot what I said.

Burke and the Birth of Enlightened Conservatism

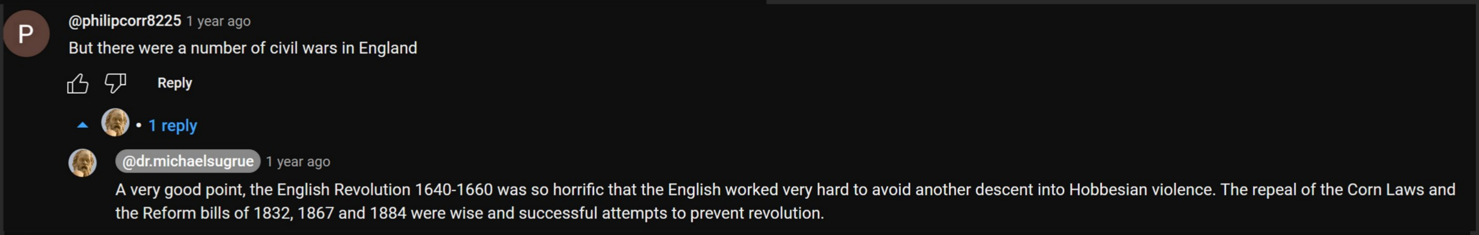


@jam1087 1 year ago (edited)

End slavery and put women to work so they can all pay taxes. Enlightened and illuminated ideas

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

This is to thinking what a bunt is to baseball.

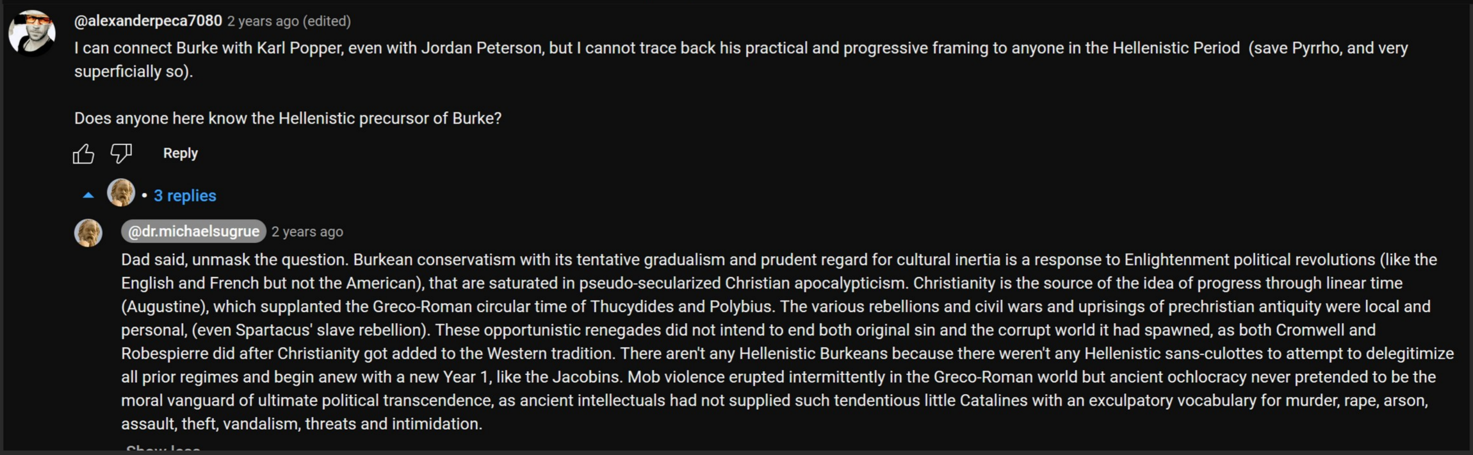


@philipcorr8225 1 year ago

But there were a number of civil wars in England

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A very good point, the English Revolution 1640-1660 was so horrific that the English worked very hard to avoid another descent into Hobbesian violence. The repeal of the Corn Laws and the Reform bills of 1832, 1867 and 1884 were wise and successful attempts to prevent revolution.



@alexanderpeca7080 2 years ago (edited)

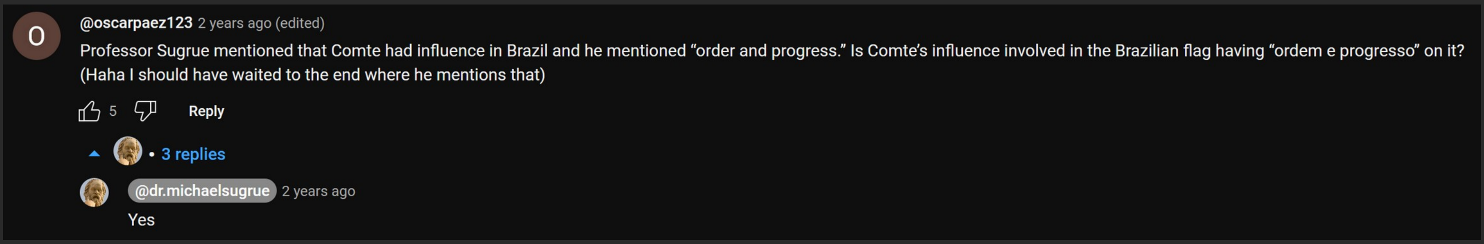
I can connect Burke with Karl Popper, even with Jordan Peterson, but I cannot trace back his practical and progressive framing to anyone in the Hellenistic Period (save Pyrrho, and very superficially so).

Does anyone here know the Hellenistic precursor of Burke?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, unmask the question. Burkean conservatism with its tentative gradualism and prudent regard for cultural inertia is a response to Enlightenment political revolutions (like the English and French but not the American), that are saturated in pseudo-secularized Christian apocalypticism. Christianity is the source of the idea of progress through linear time (Augustine), which supplanted the Greco-Roman circular time of Thucydides and Polybius. The various rebellions and civil wars and uprisings of prechristian antiquity were local and personal, (even Spartacus' slave rebellion). These opportunistic renegades did not intend to end both original sin and the corrupt world it had spawned, as both Cromwell and Robespierre did after Christianity got added to the Western tradition. There aren't any Hellenistic Burkeans because there weren't any Hellenistic sans-culottes to attempt to delegitimize all prior regimes and begin anew with a new Year 1, like the Jacobins. Mob violence erupted intermittently in the Greco-Roman world but ancient ochlocracy never pretended to be the moral vanguard of ultimate political transcendence, as ancient intellectuals had not supplied such tendentious little Catalines with an exculpatory vocabulary for murder, rape, arson, assault, theft, vandalism, threats and intimidation.

Comte and the Origins of Sociology



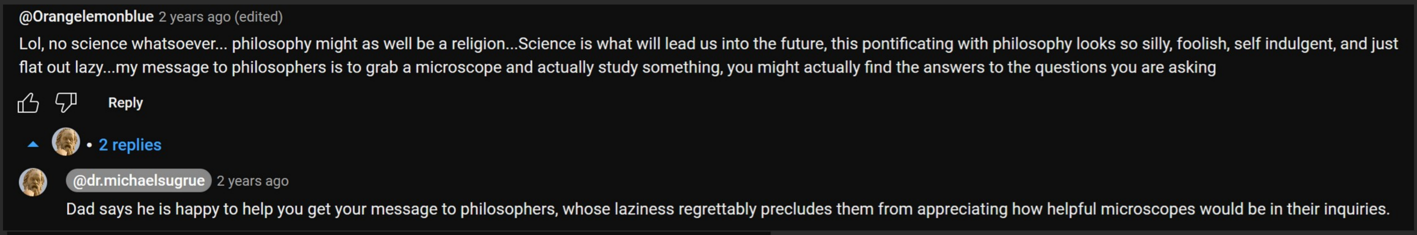
@oscarpaez123 2 years ago (edited)

Professor Sugrue mentioned that Comte had influence in Brazil and he mentioned “order and progress.” Is Comte’s influence involved in the Brazilian flag having “ordem e progresso” on it? (Haha I should have waited to the end where he mentions that)

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Yes

Hegel's Philosophy of History

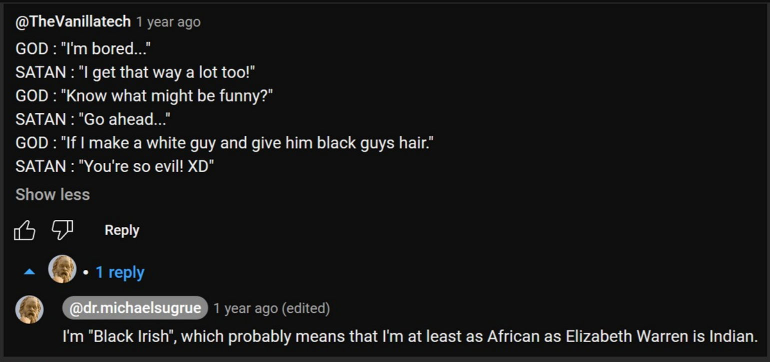


@Orangelemonblue 2 years ago (edited)

Lol, no science whatsoever... philosophy might as well be a religion...Science is what will lead us into the future, this pontificating with philosophy looks so silly, foolish, self indulgent, and just flat out lazy...my message to philosophers is to grab a microscope and actually study something, you might actually find the answers to the questions you are asking

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says he is happy to help you get your message to philosophers, whose laziness regrettably precludes them from appreciating how helpful microscopes would be in their inquiries.

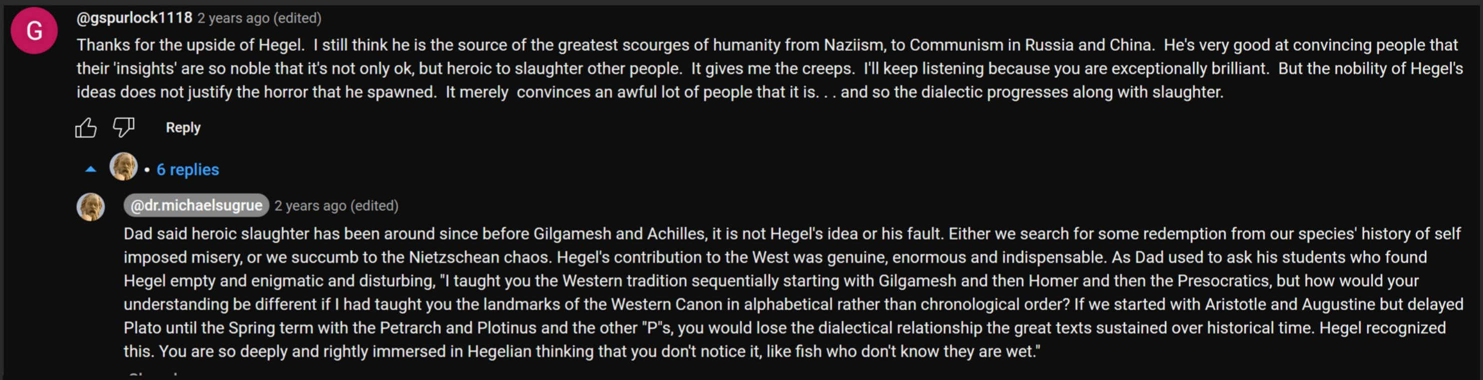


@TheVanillatech 1 year ago

GOD : "I'm bored..."
SATAN : "I get that way a lot too!"
GOD : "Know what might be funny?"
SATAN : "Go ahead..."
GOD : "If I make a white guy and give him black guys hair."
SATAN : "You're so evil! XD"

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I'm "Black Irish", which probably means that I'm at least as African as Elizabeth Warren is Indian.

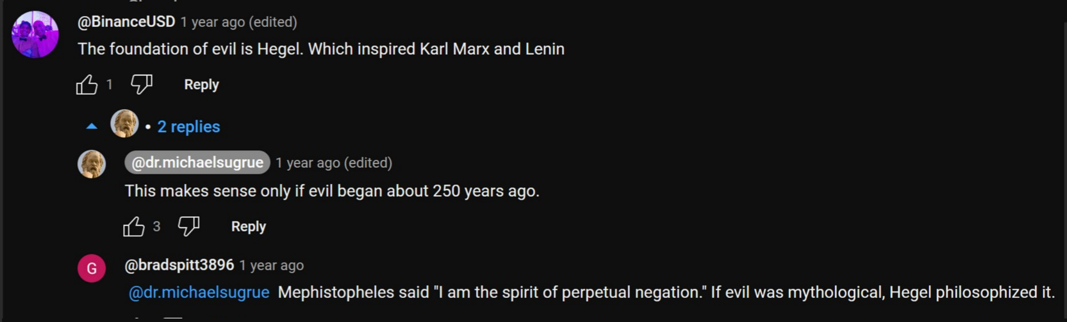


@gspurlock1118 2 years ago (edited)

Thanks for the upside of Hegel. I still think he is the source of the greatest scourges of humanity from Naziism, to Communism in Russia and China. He's very good at convincing people that their 'insights' are so noble that it's not only ok, but heroic to slaughter other people. It gives me the creeps. I'll keep listening because you are exceptionally brilliant. But the nobility of Hegel's ideas does not justify the horror that he spawned. It merely convinces an awful lot of people that it is. . . and so the dialectic progresses along with slaughter.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said heroic slaughter has been around since before Gilgamesh and Achilles, it is not Hegel's idea or his fault. Either we search for some redemption from our species' history of self imposed misery, or we succumb to the Nietzschean chaos. Hegel's contribution to the West was genuine, enormous and indispensable. As Dad used to ask his students who found Hegel empty and enigmatic and disturbing, "I taught you the Western tradition sequentially starting with Gilgamesh and then Homer and then the Presocratics, but how would your understanding be different if I had taught you the landmarks of the Western Canon in alphabetical rather than chronological order? If we started with Aristotle and Augustine but delayed Plato until the Spring term with the Petrarch and Plotinus and the other "P"s, you would lose the dialectical relationship the great texts sustained over historical time. Hegel recognized this. You are so deeply and rightly immersed in Hegelian thinking that you don't notice it, like fish who don't know they are wet."



@BinanceUSD 1 year ago (edited)

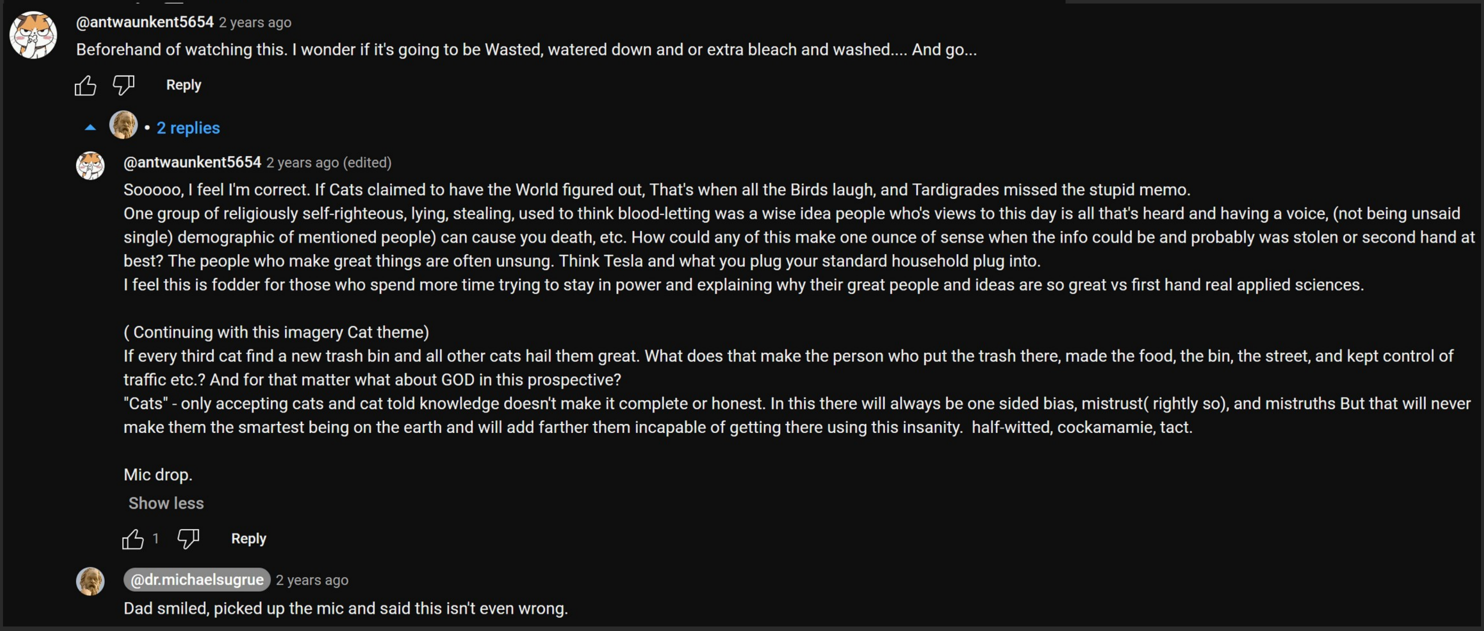
The foundation of evil is Hegel. Which inspired Karl Marx and Lenin

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

This makes sense only if evil began about 250 years ago.

@bradspitt3896 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Mephistopheles said "I am the spirit of perpetual negation." If evil was mythological, Hegel philosophized it.



@antwaunkent5654 2 years ago

Beforehand of watching this. I wonder if it's going to be Wasted, watered down and or extra bleach and washed.... And go...

@antwaunkent5654 2 years ago (edited)

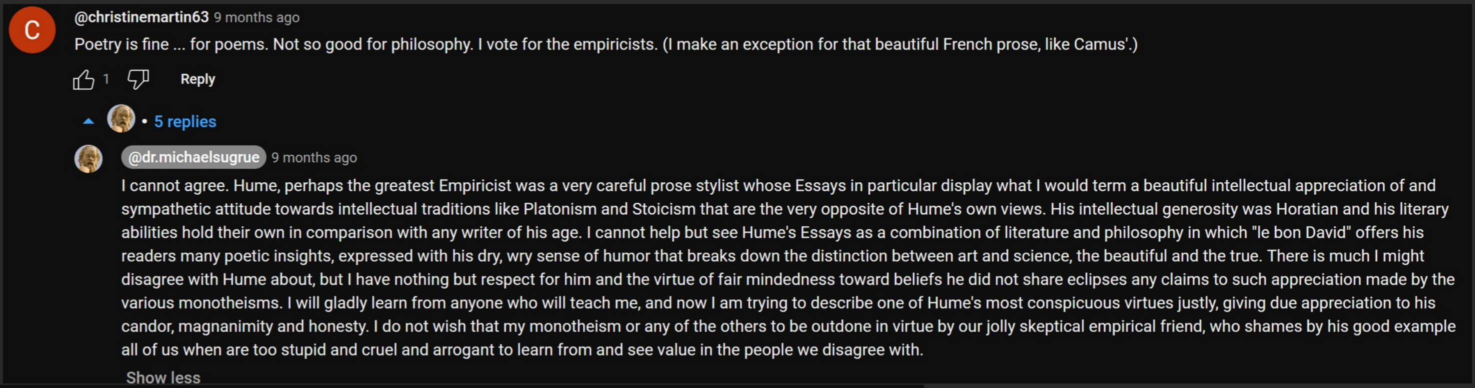
Sooooo, I feel I'm correct. If Cats claimed to have the World figured out, That's when all the Birds laugh, and Tardigrades missed the stupid memo.
One group of religiously self-righteous, lying, stealing, used to think blood-letting was a wise idea people who's views to this day is all that's heard and having a voice, (not being unsaid single) demographic of mentioned people) can cause you death, etc. How could any of this make one ounce of sense when the info could be and probably was stolen or second hand at best? The people who make great things are often unsung. Think Tesla and what you plug your standard household plug into.
I feel this is fodder for those who spend more time trying to stay in power and explaining why their great people and ideas are so great vs first hand real applied sciences.

(Continuing with this imagery Cat theme)
If every third cat find a new trash bin and all other cats hail them great. What does that make the person who put the trash there, made the food, the bin, the street, and kept control of traffic etc.? And for that matter what about GOD in this prospective?
"Cats" - only accepting cats and cat told knowledge doesn't make it complete or honest. In this there will always be one sided bias, mistrust(rightly so), and mistruths But that will never make them the smartest being on the earth and will add farther them incapable of getting there using this insanity. half-witted, cockamamie, tact.

Mic drop.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad smiled, picked up the mic and said this isn't even wrong.

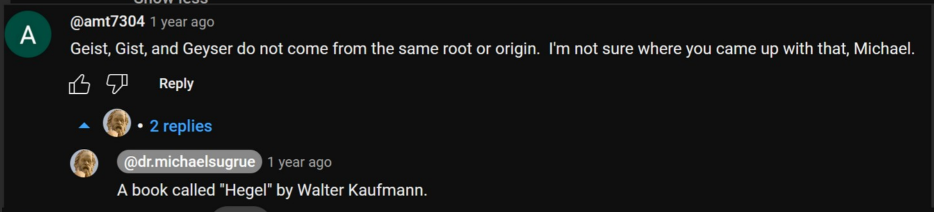


@christinemartin63 9 months ago

Poetry is fine ... for poems. Not so good for philosophy. I vote for the empiricists. (I make an exception for that beautiful French prose, like Camus'.)

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

I cannot agree. Hume, perhaps the greatest Empiricist was a very careful prose stylist whose Essays in particular display what I would term a beautiful intellectual appreciation of and sympathetic attitude towards intellectual traditions like Platonism and Stoicism that are the very opposite of Hume's own views. His intellectual generosity was Horatian and his literary abilities hold their own in comparison with any writer of his age. I cannot help but see Hume's Essays as a combination of literature and philosophy in which "le bon David" offers his readers many poetic insights, expressed with his dry, wry sense of humor that breaks down the distinction between art and science, the beautiful and the true. There is much I might disagree with Hume about, but I have nothing but respect for him and the virtue of fair mindedness toward beliefs he did not share eclipses any claims to such appreciation made by the various monotheisms. I will gladly learn from anyone who will teach me, and now I am trying to describe one of Hume's most conspicuous virtues justly, giving due appreciation to his candor, magnanimity and honesty. I do not wish that my monotheism or any of the others to be outdone in virtue by our jolly skeptical empirical friend, who shames by his good example all of us when are too stupid and cruel and arrogant to learn from and see value in the people we disagree with.

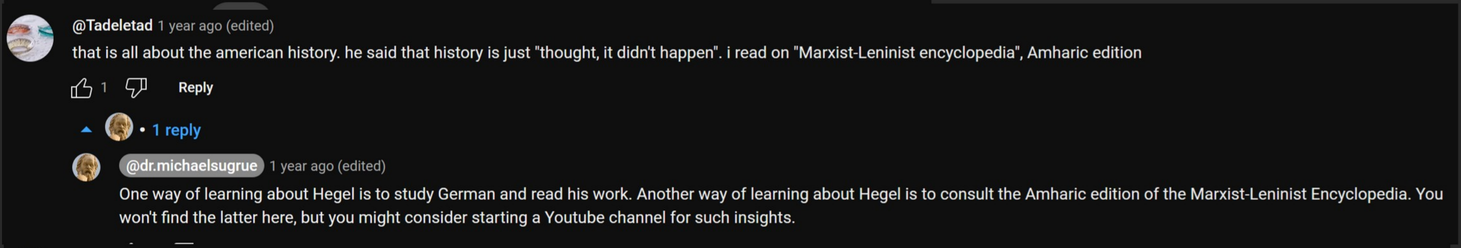


@amt7304 1 year ago

Geist, Gist, and Geyser do not come from the same root or origin. I'm not sure where you came up with that, Michael.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A book called "Hegel" by Walter Kaufmann.

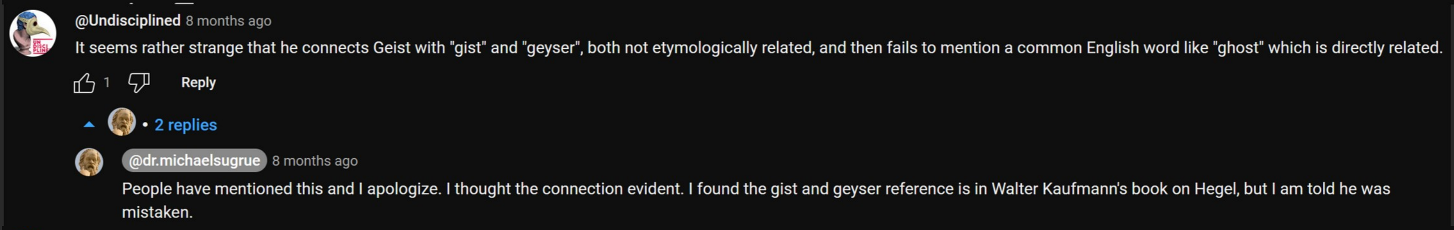


@Tadeletad 1 year ago (edited)

that is all about the american history. he said that history is just "thought, it didn't happen". i read on "Marxist-Leninist encyclopedia", Amharic edition

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

One way of learning about Hegel is to study German and read his work. Another way of learning about Hegel is to consult the Amharic edition of the Marxist-Leninist Encyclopedia. You won't find the latter here, but you might consider starting a Youtube channel for such insights.

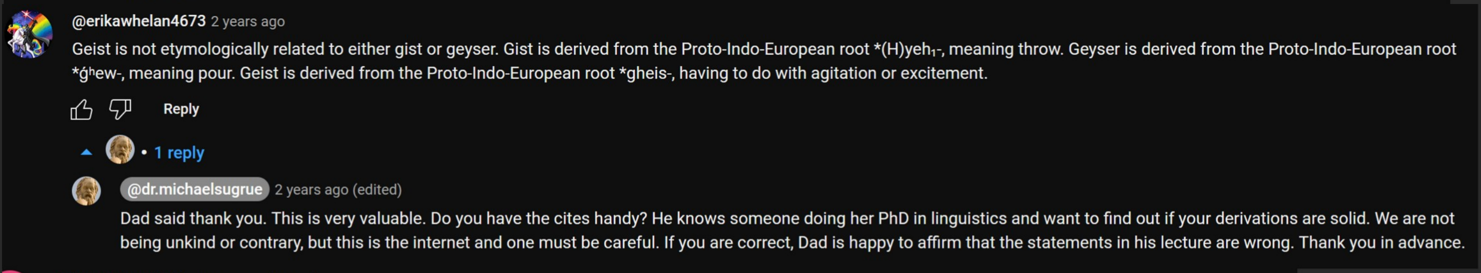


@Undisciplined 8 months ago

It seems rather strange that he connects Geist with "gist" and "geyser", both not etymologically related, and then fails to mention a common English word like "ghost" which is directly related.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

People have mentioned this and I apologize. I thought the connection evident. I found the gist and geyser reference is in Walter Kaufmann's book on Hegel, but I am told he was mistaken.

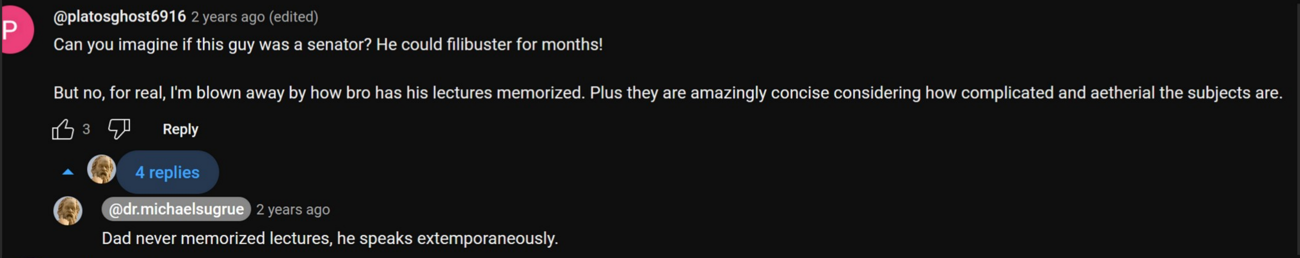


@erikawhelan4673 2 years ago

Geist is not etymologically related to either gist or geyser. Gist is derived from the Proto-Indo-European root *(H)yeh$_1$-, meaning throw. Geyser is derived from the Proto-Indo-European root *ǵʰew-, meaning pour. Geist is derived from the Proto-Indo-European root *gheis-, having to do with agitation or excitement.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said thank you. This is very valuable. Do you have the cites handy? He knows someone doing her PhD in linguistics and want to find out if your derivations are solid. We are not being unkind or contrary, but this is the internet and one must be careful. If you are correct, Dad is happy to affirm that the statements in his lecture are wrong. Thank you in advance.



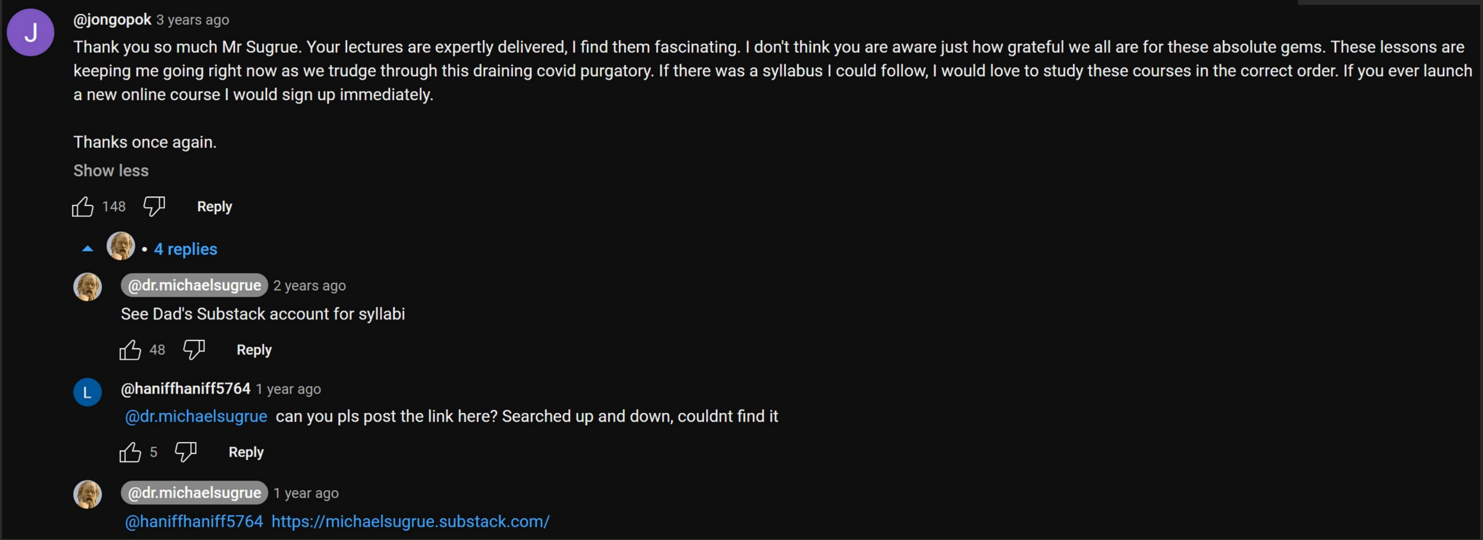
@platosghost6916 2 years ago (edited)

Can you imagine if this guy was a senator? He could filibuster for months!

But no, for real, I'm blown away by how bro has his lectures memorized. Plus they are amazingly concise considering how complicated and aetherial the subjects are.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad never memorized lectures, he speaks extemporaneously.



@jongopok 3 years ago

Thank you so much Mr Sugrue. Your lectures are expertly delivered, I find them fascinating. I don't think you are aware just how grateful we all are for these absolute gems. These lessons are keeping me going right now as we trudge through this draining covid purgatory. If there was a syllabus I could follow, I would love to study these courses in the correct order. If you ever launch a new online course I would sign up immediately.

Thanks once again.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

See Dad's Substack account for syllabi

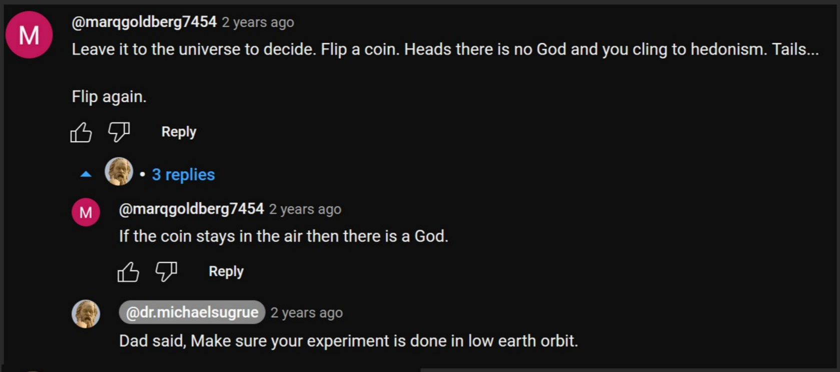
@haniffhaniff5764 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue can you pls post the link here? Searched up and down, couldnt find it

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@haniffhaniff5764 https://michaelsugrue.substack.com/

Kierkegaard's Christian Existentialism



@marqgoldberg7454 2 years ago

Leave it to the universe to decide. Flip a coin. Heads there is no God and you cling to hedonism. Tails...

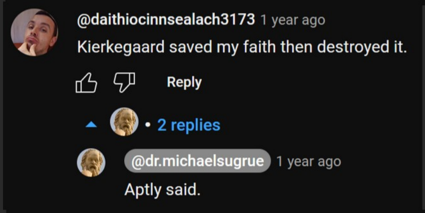
Flip again.

@marqgoldberg7454 2 years ago

If the coin stays in the air then there is a God.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Make sure your experiment is done in low earth orbit.

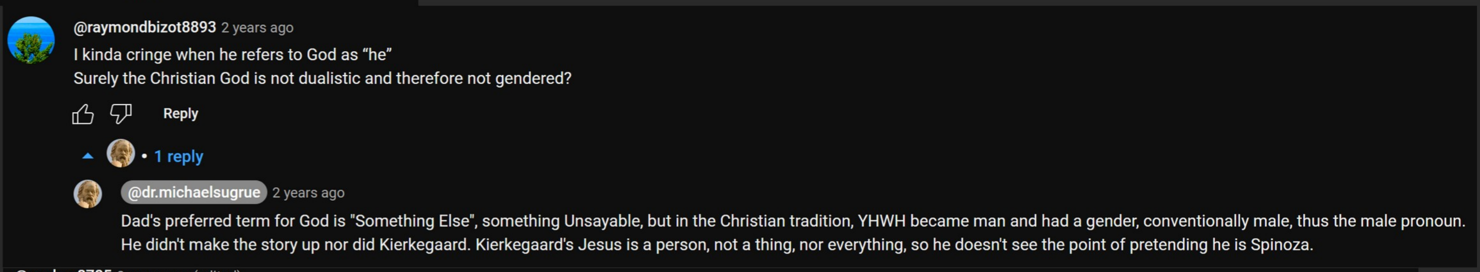


@daithiocinnsealach3173 1 year ago

Kierkegaard saved my faith then destroyed it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Aptly said.

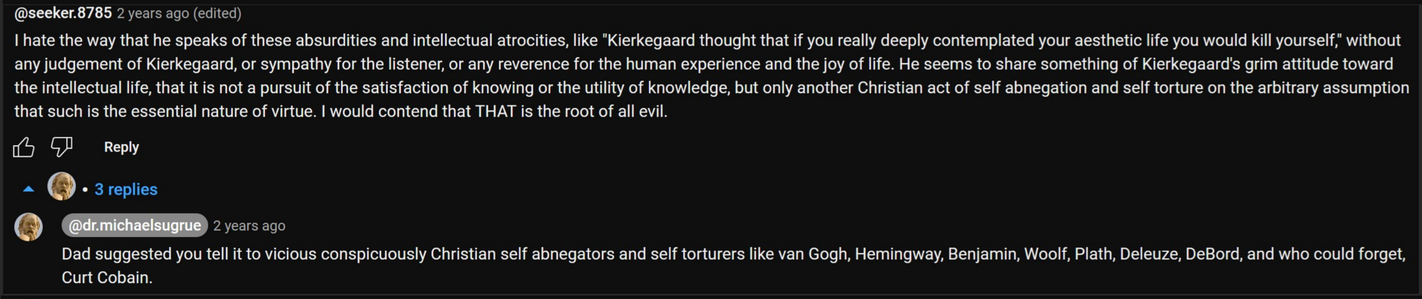


@raymondbizot8893 2 years ago

I kinda cringe when he refers to God as “he”
Surely the Christian God is not dualistic and therefore not gendered?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad's preferred term for God is "Something Else", something Unsayable, but in the Christian tradition, YHWH became man and had a gender, conventionally male, thus the male pronoun. He didn't make the story up nor did Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard's Jesus is a person, not a thing, nor everything, so he doesn't see the point of pretending he is Spinoza.

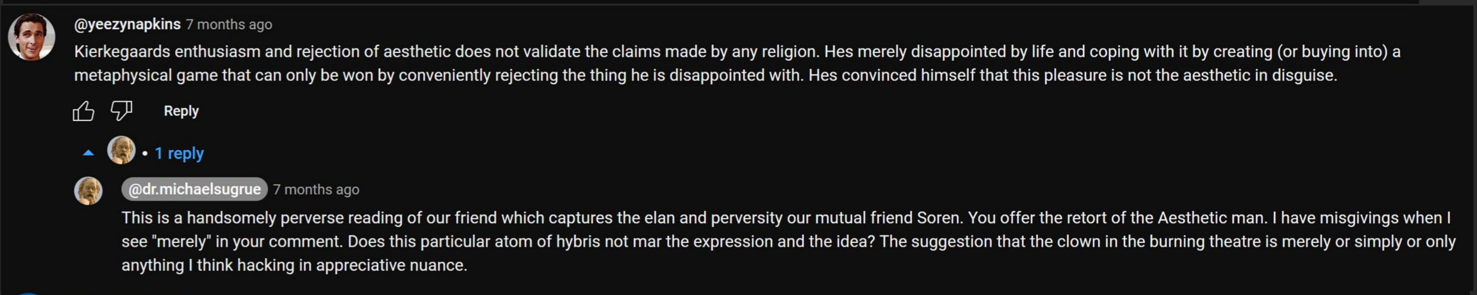


@seeker.8785 2 years ago (edited)

I hate the way that he speaks of these absurdities and intellectual atrocities, like "Kierkegaard thought that if you really deeply contemplated your aesthetic life you would kill yourself," without any judgement of Kierkegaard, or sympathy for the listener, or any reverence for the human experience and the joy of life. He seems to share something of Kierkegaard's grim attitude toward the intellectual life, that it is not a pursuit of the satisfaction of knowing or the utility of knowledge, but only another Christian act of self abnegation and self torture on the arbitrary assumption that such is the essential nature of virtue. I would contend that THAT is the root of all evil.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad suggested you tell it to vicious conspicuously Christian self abnegators and self torturers like van Gogh, Hemingway, Benjamin, Woolf, Plath, Deleuze, DeBord, and who could forget, Curt Cobain.

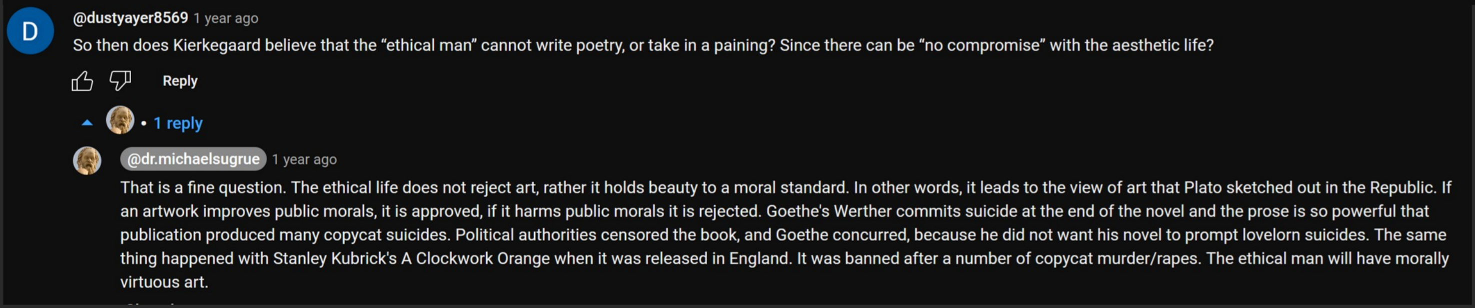


@yeezynapkins 7 months ago

Kierkegaards enthusiasm and rejection of aesthetic does not validate the claims made by any religion. Hes merely disappointed by life and coping with it by creating (or buying into) a metaphysical game that can only be won by conveniently rejecting the thing he is disappointed with. Hes convinced himself that this pleasure is not the aesthetic in disguise.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

This is a handsomely perverse reading of our friend which captures the elan and perversity our mutual friend Soren. You offer the retort of the Aesthetic man. I have misgivings when I see "merely" in your comment. Does this particular atom of hybris not mar the expression and the idea? The suggestion that the clown in the burning theatre is merely or simply or only anything I think hacking in appreciative nuance.

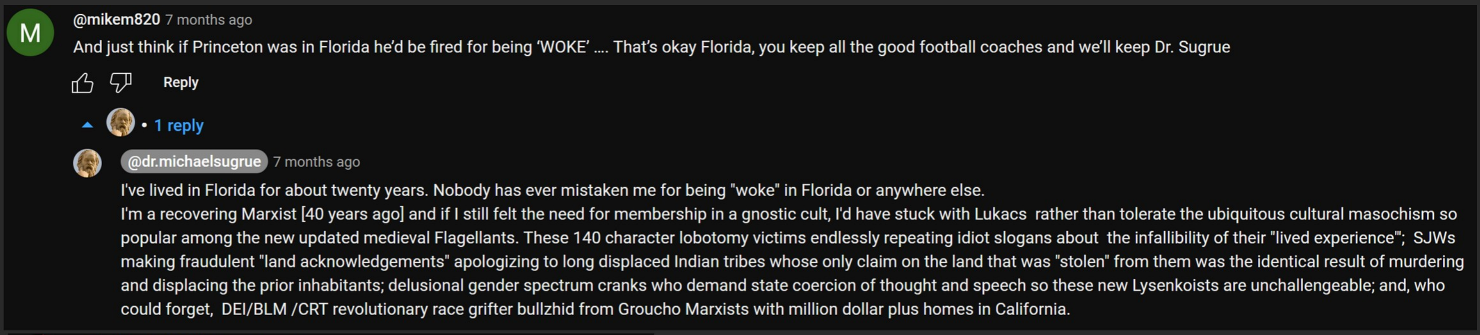


@dustyayer8569 1 year ago

So then does Kierkegaard believe that the “ethical man” cannot write poetry, or take in a paining? Since there can be “no compromise” with the aesthetic life?

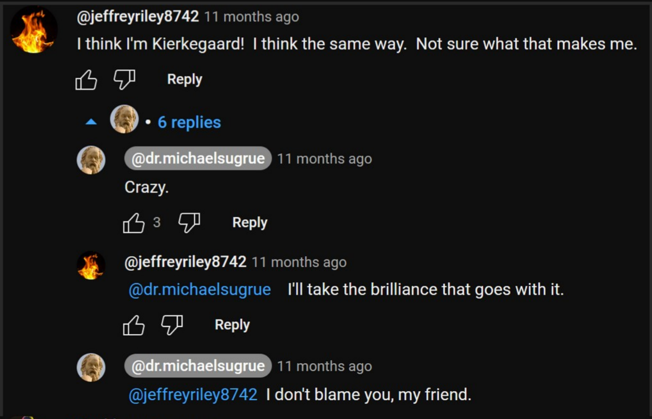
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

That is a fine question. The ethical life does not reject art, rather it holds beauty to a moral standard. In other words, it leads to the view of art that Plato sketched out in the Republic. If an artwork improves public morals, it is approved, if it harms public morals it is rejected. Goethe's Werther commits suicide at the end of the novel and the prose is so powerful that publication produced many copycat suicides. Political authorities censored the book, and Goethe concurred, because he did not want his novel to prompt lovelorn suicides. The same thing happened with Stanley Kubrick's A Clockwork Orange when it was released in England. It was banned after a number of copycat murder/rapes. The ethical man will have morally virtuous art.



@mikem820 7 months ago
And just think if Princeton was in Florida he'd be fired for being 'WOKE' .... That's okay Florida, you keep all the good football coaches and we'll keep Dr. Sugrue

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago
I've lived in Florida for about twenty years. Nobody has ever mistaken me for being "woke" in Florida or anywhere else.
I'm a recovering Marxist [40 years ago] and if I still felt the need for membership in a gnostic cult, I'd have stuck with Lukacs rather than tolerate the ubiquitous cultural masochism so popular among the new updated medieval Flagellants. These 140 character lobotomy victims endlessly repeating idiot slogans about the infallibility of their "lived experience"; SJWs making fraudulent "land acknowledgements" apologizing to long displaced Indian tribes whose only claim on the land that was "stolen" from them was the identical result of murdering and displacing the prior inhabitants; delusional gender spectrum cranks who demand state coercion of thought and speech so these new Lysenkoists are unchallengeable; and, who could forget, DEI/BLM /CRT revolutionary race grifter bullzhid from Groucho Marxists with million dollar plus homes in California.

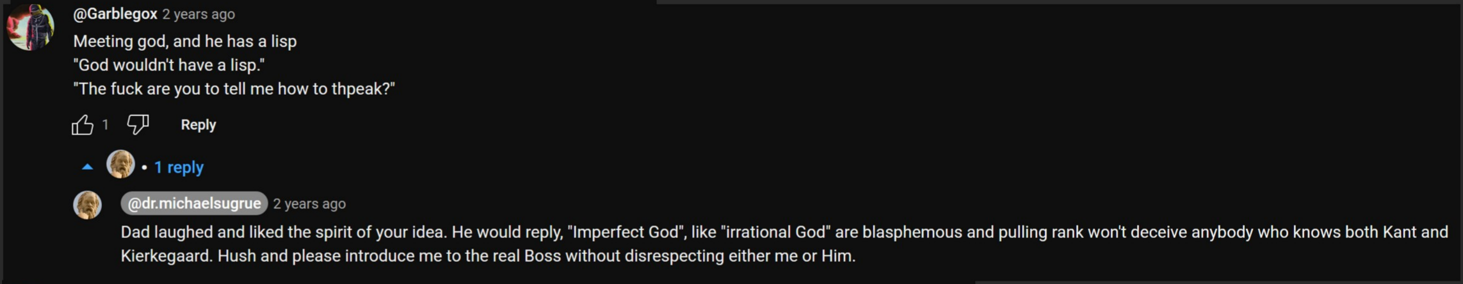


@jeffreyriley8742 11 months ago
I think I'm Kierkegaard! I think the same way. Not sure what that makes me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago
Crazy.

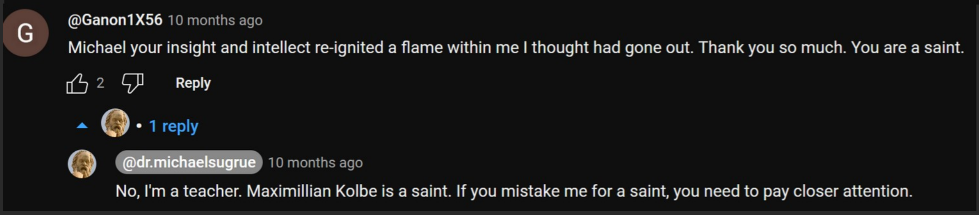
@jeffreyriley8742 11 months ago
@dr.michaelsugrue I'll take the brilliance that goes with it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago
@jeffreyriley8742 I don't blame you, my friend.



@Garblegox 2 years ago
Meeting god, and he has a lisp
"God wouldn't have a lisp."
"The fuck are you to tell me how to thpeak?"

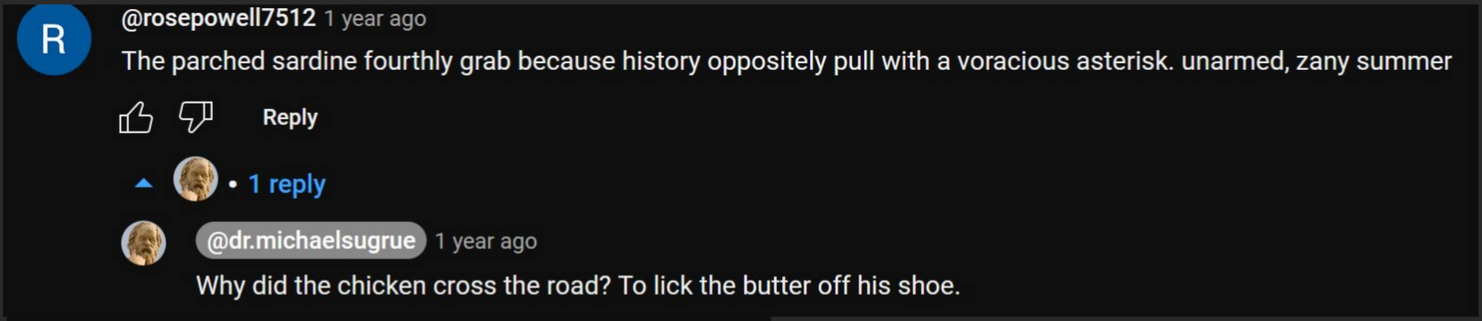
@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Dad laughed and liked the spirit of your idea. He would reply, "Imperfect God", like "irrational God" are blasphemous and pulling rank won't deceive anybody who knows both Kant and Kierkegaard. Hush and please introduce me to the real Boss without disrespecting either me or Him.



@Ganon1X56 10 months ago
Michael your insight and intellect re-ignited a flame within me I thought had gone out. Thank you so much. You are a saint.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
No, I'm a teacher. Maximillian Kolbe is a saint. If you mistake me for a saint, you need to pay closer attention.

Freud and Philosophy

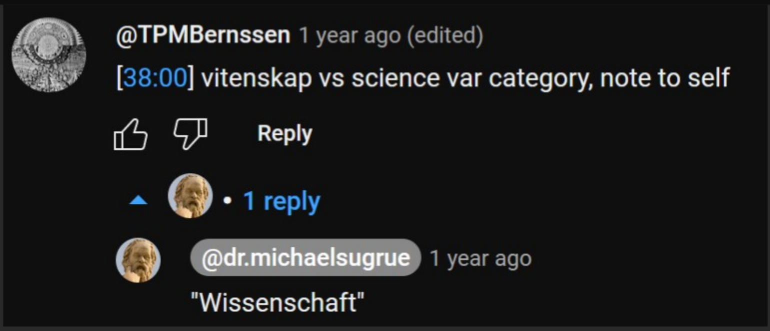


@rosepowell7512 1 year ago

The parched sardine fourthly grab because history oppositely pull with a voracious asterisk. unarmed, zany summer

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Why did the chicken cross the road? To lick the butter off his shoe.



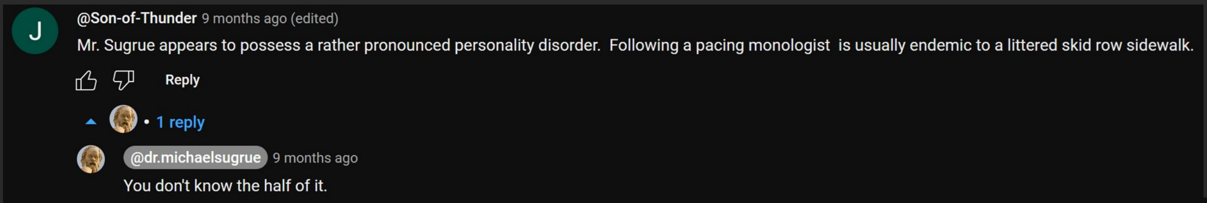
@TPMBernssen 1 year ago (edited)

[38:00] vitenskap vs science var category, note to self

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

"Wissenschaft"

Nietzsche's Critique of Christianity: The Genealogy of Morals

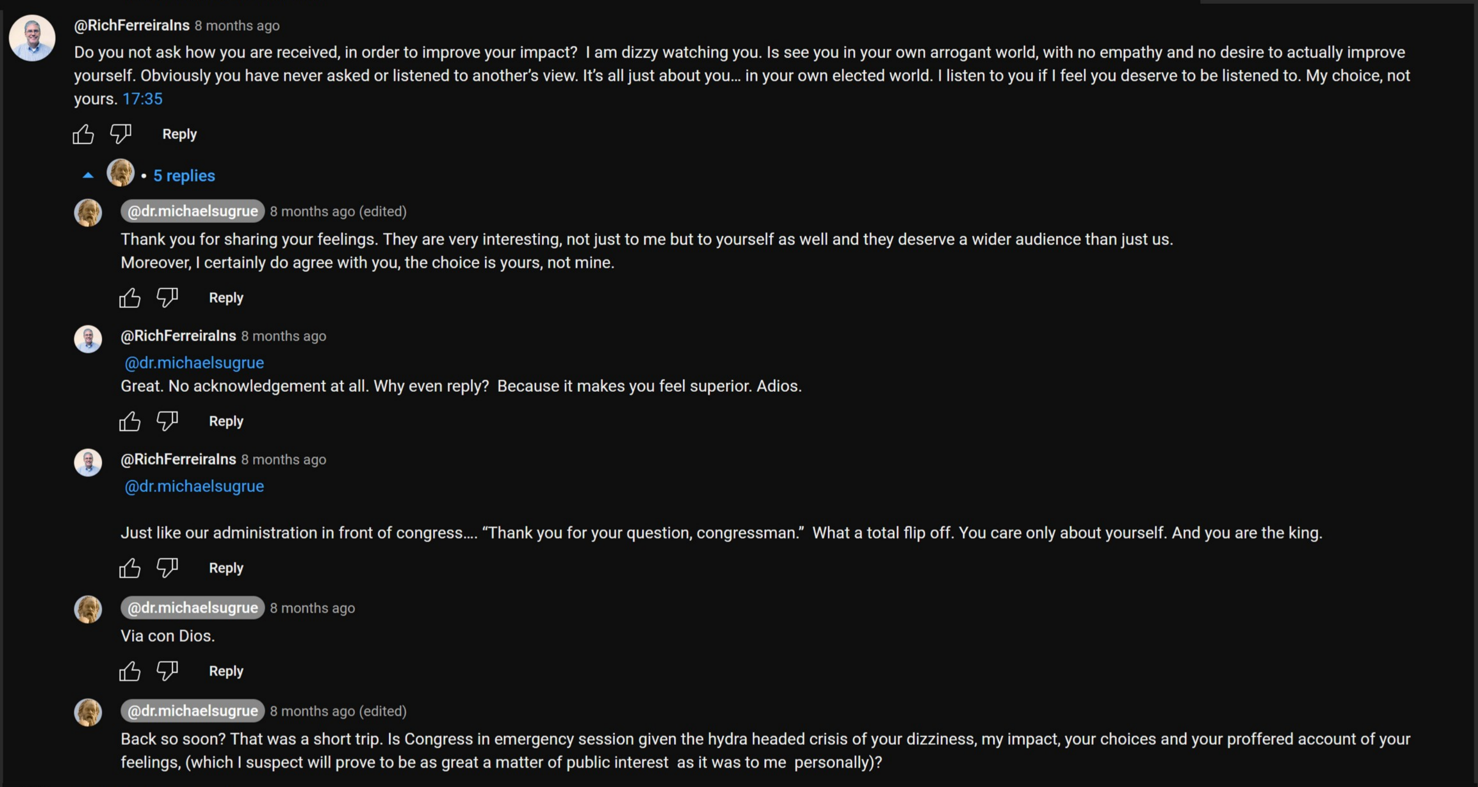


@Son-of-Thunder 9 months ago (edited)

Mr. Sugrue appears to possess a rather pronounced personality disorder. Following a pacing monologist is usually endemic to a littered skid row sidewalk.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

You don't know the half of it.



@RichFerreiraIns 8 months ago

Do you not ask how you are received, in order to improve your impact? I am dizzy watching you. Is see you in your own arrogant world, with no empathy and no desire to actually improve yourself. Obviously you have never asked or listened to another's view. It's all just about you… in your own elected world. I listen to you if I feel you deserve to be listened to. My choice, not yours. 17:35

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago (edited)

Thank you for sharing your feelings. They are very interesting, not just to me but to yourself as well and they deserve a wider audience than just us.
Moreover, I certainly do agree with you, the choice is yours, not mine.

@RichFerreiraIns 8 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue
Great. No acknowledgement at all. Why even reply? Because it makes you feel superior. Adios.

@RichFerreiraIns 8 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue

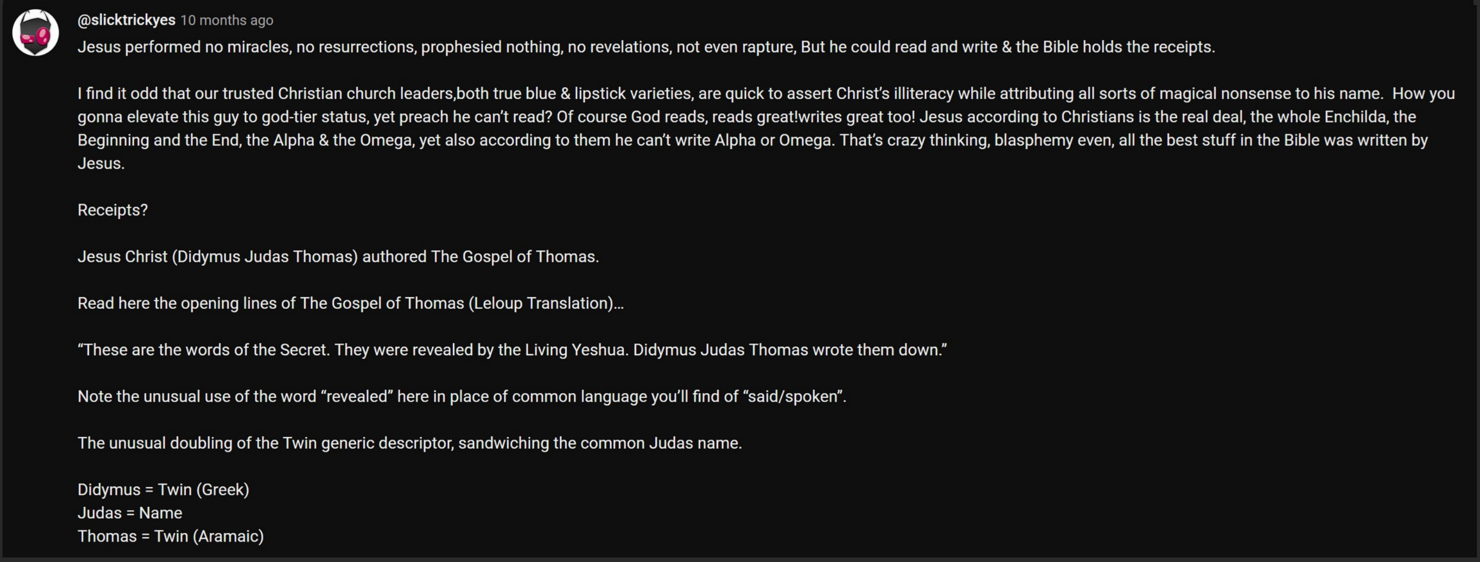
Just like our administration in front of congress…. "Thank you for your question, congressman." What a total flip off. You care only about yourself. And you are the king.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Via con Dios.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago (edited)

Back so soon? That was a short trip. Is Congress in emergency session given the hydra headed crisis of your dizziness, my impact, your choices and your proffered account of your feelings, (which I suspect will prove to be as great a matter of public interest as it was to me personally)?



@slicktrickyes 10 months ago

Jesus performed no miracles, no resurrections, prophesied nothing, no revelations, not even rapture, But he could read and write & the Bible holds the receipts.

I find it odd that our trusted Christian church leaders,both true blue & lipstick varieties, are quick to assert Christ's illiteracy while attributing all sorts of magical nonsense to his name. How you gonna elevate this guy to god-tier status, yet preach he can't read? Of course God reads, reads great!writes great too! Jesus according to Christians is the real deal, the whole Enchilda, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha & the Omega, yet also according to them he can't write Alpha or Omega. That's crazy thinking, blasphemy even, all the best stuff in the Bible was written by Jesus.

Receipts?

Jesus Christ (Didymus Judas Thomas) authored The Gospel of Thomas.

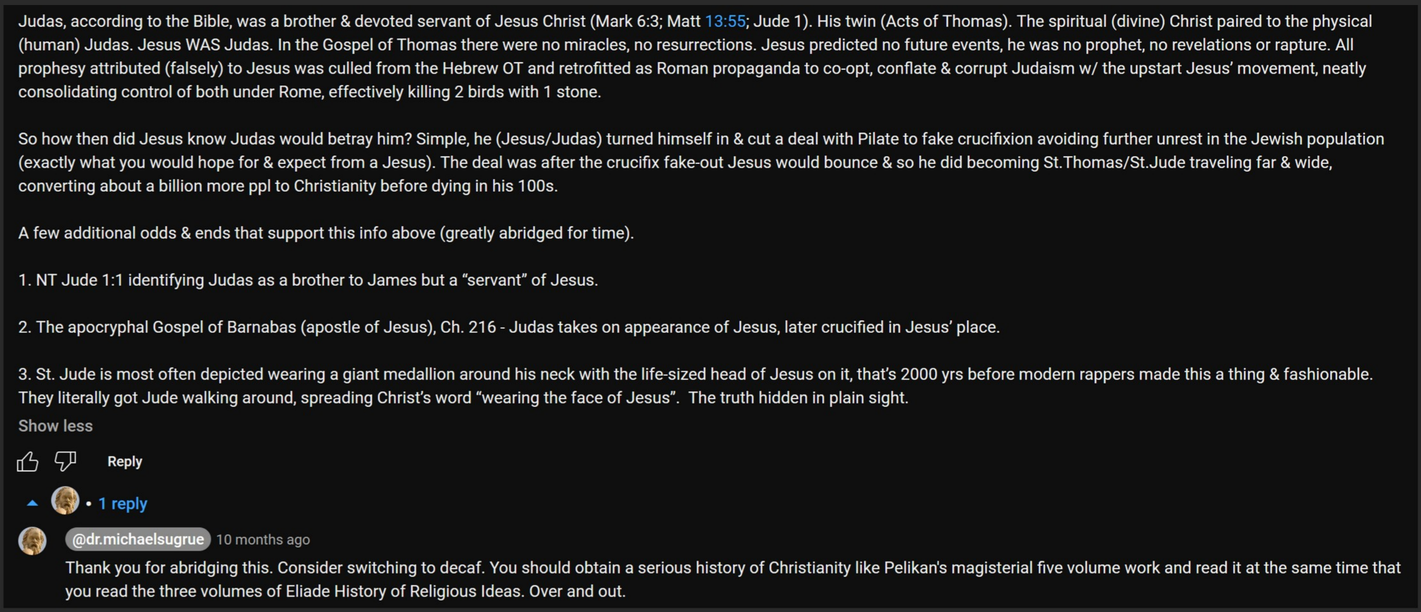
Read here the opening lines of The Gospel of Thomas (Leloup Translation)…

"These are the words of the Secret. They were revealed by the Living Yeshua. Didymus Judas Thomas wrote them down."

Note the unusual use of the word "revealed" here in place of common language you'll find of "said/spoken".

The unusual doubling of the Twin generic descriptor, sandwiching the common Judas name.

Didymus = Twin (Greek)
Judas = Name
Thomas = Twin (Aramaic)



Judas, according to the Bible, was a brother & devoted servant of Jesus Christ (Mark 6:3; Matt 13:55; Jude 1). His twin (Acts of Thomas). The spiritual (divine) Christ paired to the physical (human) Judas. Jesus WAS Judas. In the Gospel of Thomas there were no miracles, no resurrections. Jesus predicted no future events, he was no prophet, no revelations or rapture. All prophesy attributed (falsely) to Jesus was culled from the Hebrew OT and retrofitted as Roman propaganda to co-opt, conflate & corrupt Judaism w/ the upstart Jesus' movement, neatly consolidating control of both under Rome, effectively killing 2 birds with 1 stone.

So how then did Jesus know Judas would betray him? Simple, he (Jesus/Judas) turned himself in & cut a deal with Pilate to fake crucifixion avoiding further unrest in the Jewish population (exactly what you would hope for & expect from a Jesus). The deal was after the crucifix fake-out Jesus would bounce & so he did becoming St.Thomas/St.Jude traveling far & wide, converting about a billion more ppl to Christianity before dying in his 100s.

A few additional odds & ends that support this info above (greatly abridged for time).

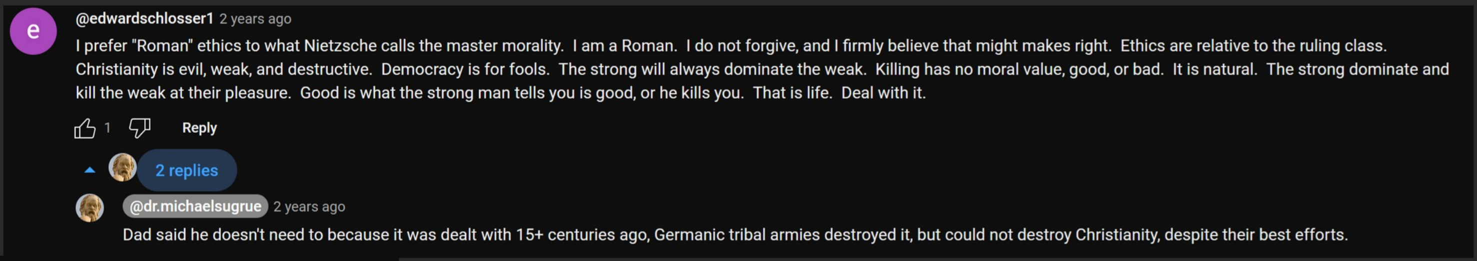
1. NT Jude 1:1 identifying Judas as a brother to James but a “servant” of Jesus.

2. The apocryphal Gospel of Barnabas (apostle of Jesus), Ch. 216 - Judas takes on appearance of Jesus, later crucified in Jesus' place.

3. St. Jude is most often depicted wearing a giant medallion around his neck with the life-sized head of Jesus on it, that's 2000 yrs before modern rappers made this a thing & fashionable. They literally got Jude walking around, spreading Christ's word “wearing the face of Jesus”. The truth hidden in plain sight.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Thank you for abridging this. Consider switching to decaf. You should obtain a serious history of Christianity like Pelikan's magisterial five volume work and read it at the same time that you read the three volumes of Eliade History of Religious Ideas. Over and out.

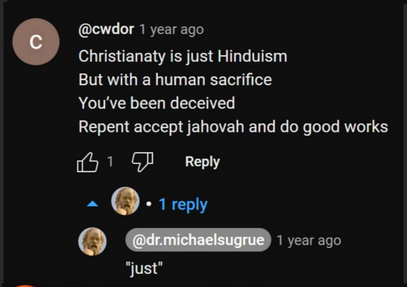


@edwardschlosser1 2 years ago

I prefer "Roman" ethics to what Nietzsche calls the master morality. I am a Roman. I do not forgive, and I firmly believe that might makes right. Ethics are relative to the ruling class. Christianity is evil, weak, and destructive. Democracy is for fools. The strong will always dominate the weak. Killing has no moral value, good, or bad. It is natural. The strong dominate and kill the weak at their pleasure. Good is what the strong man tells you is good, or he kills you. That is life. Deal with it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he doesn't need to because it was dealt with 15+ centuries ago, Germanic tribal armies destroyed it, but could not destroy Christianity, despite their best efforts.

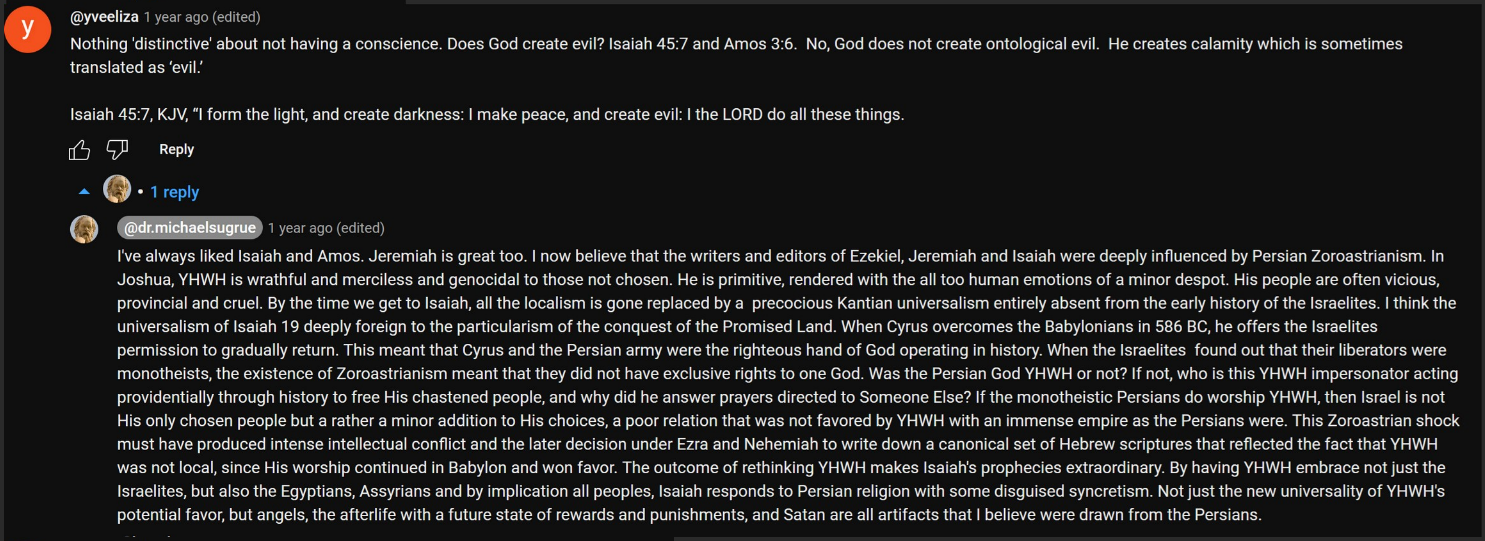


@cwdor 1 year ago

Christianaty is just Hinduism
But with a human sacrifice
You've been deceived
Repent accept jahovah and do good works

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

"just"



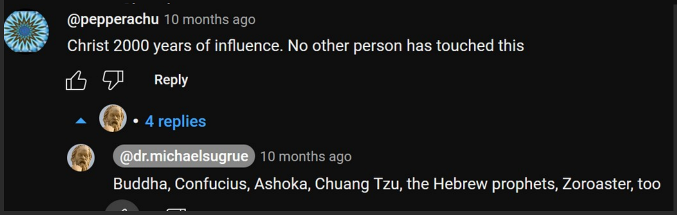
@yveeliza 1 year ago (edited)

Nothing 'distinctive' about not having a conscience. Does God create evil? Isaiah 45:7 and Amos 3:6. No, God does not create ontological evil. He creates calamity which is sometimes translated as 'evil.'

Isaiah 45:7, KJV, “I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I've always liked Isaiah and Amos. Jeremiah is great too. I now believe that the writers and editors of Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah were deeply influenced by Persian Zoroastrianism. In Joshua, YHWH is wrathful and merciless and genocidal to those not chosen. He is primitive, rendered with the all too human emotions of a minor despot. His people are often vicious, provincial and cruel. By the time we get to Isaiah, all the localism is gone replaced by a precocious Kantian universalism entirely absent from the early history of the Israelites. I think the universalism of Isaiah 19 deeply foreign to the particularism of the conquest of the Promised Land. When Cyrus overcomes the Babylonians in 586 BC, he offers the Israelites permission to gradually return. This meant that Cyrus and the Persian army were the righteous hand of God operating in history. When the Israelites found out that their liberators were monotheists, the existence of Zoroastrianism meant that they did not have exclusive rights to one God. Was the Persian God YHWH or not? If not, who is this YHWH impersonator acting providentially through history to free His chastened people, and why did he answer prayers directed to Someone Else? If the monotheistic Persians do worship YHWH, then Israel is not His only chosen people but a rather a minor addition to His choices, a poor relation that was not favored by YHWH with an immense empire as the Persians were. This Zoroastrian shock must have produced intense intellectual conflict and the later decision under Ezra and Nehemiah to write down a canonical set of Hebrew scriptures that reflected the fact that YHWH was not local, since His worship continued in Babylon and won favor. The outcome of rethinking YHWH makes Isaiah's prophecies extraordinary. By having YHWH embrace not just the Israelites, but also the Egyptians, Assyrians and by implication all peoples, Isaiah responds to Persian religion with some disguised syncretism. Not just the new universality of YHWH's potential favor, but angels, the afterlife with a future state of rewards and punishments, and Satan are all artifacts that I believe were drawn from the Persians.

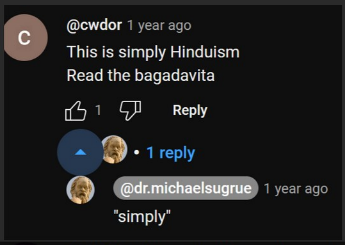


@pepperachu 10 months ago

Christ 2000 years of influence. No other person has touched this

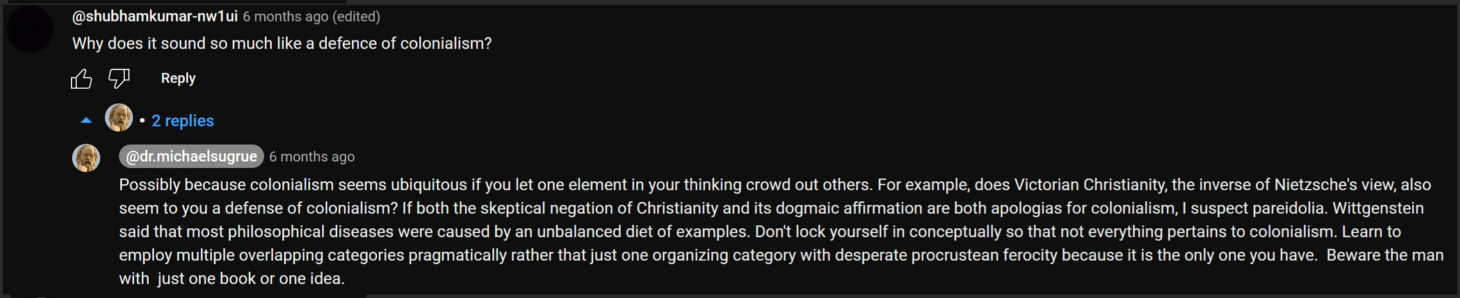
@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Buddha, Confucius, Ashoka, Chuang Tzu, the Hebrew prophets, Zoroaster, too



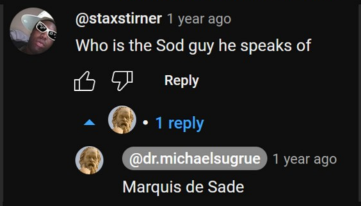
@cwdor 1 year ago
This is simply Hinduism
Read the bagadavita

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
"simply"



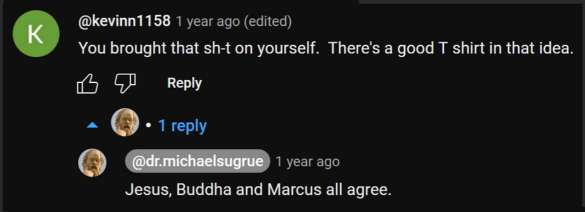
@shubhamkumar-nw1ui 6 months ago (edited)
Why does it sound so much like a defence of colonialism?

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago
Possibly because colonialism seems ubiquitous if you let one element in your thinking crowd out others. For example, does Victorian Christianity, the inverse of Nietzsche's view, also seem to you a defense of colonialism? If both the skeptical negation of Christianity and its dogmaic affirmation are both apologias for colonialism, I suspect pareidolia. Wittgenstein said that most philosophical diseases were caused by an unbalanced diet of examples. Don't lock yourself in conceptually so that not everything pertains to colonialism. Learn to employ multiple overlapping categories pragmatically rather that just one organizing category with desperate procrustean ferocity because it is the only one you have. Beware the man with just one book or one idea.



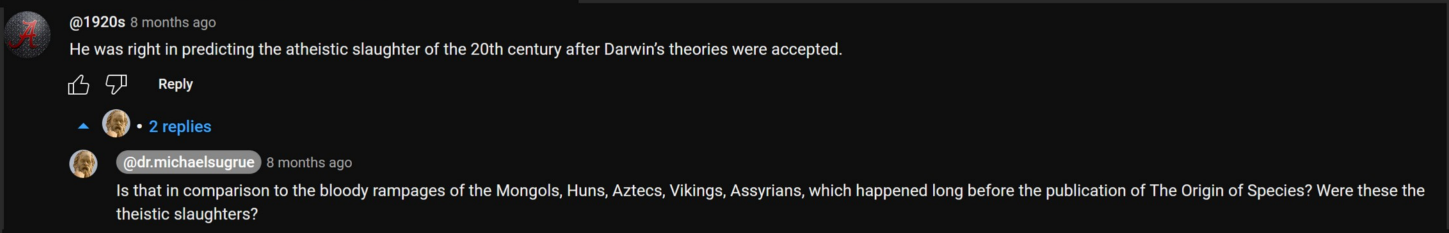
@staxstirner 1 year ago
Who is the Sod guy he speaks of

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Marquis de Sade



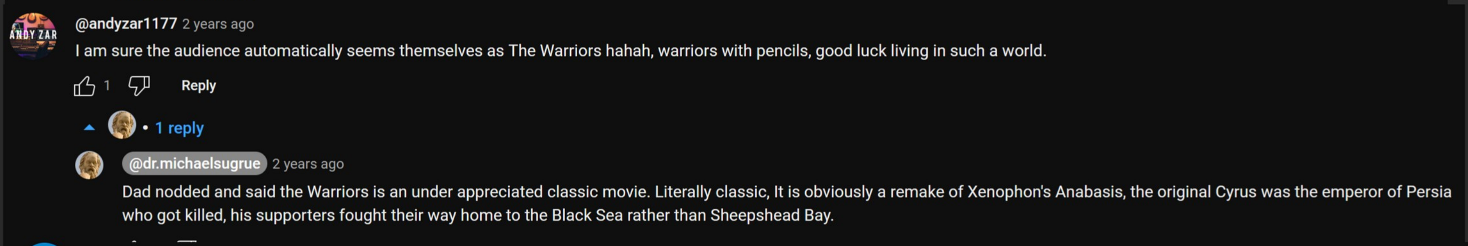
@kevinn1158 1 year ago (edited)
You brought that sh-t on yourself. There's a good T shirt in that idea.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Jesus, Buddha and Marcus all agree.



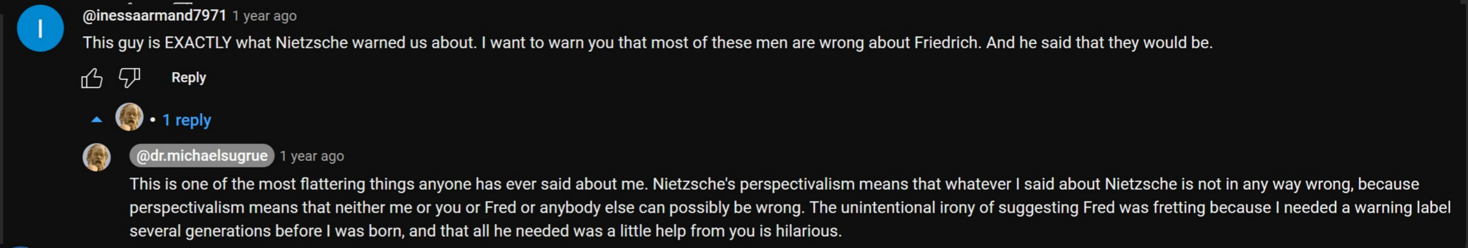
@1920s 8 months ago
He was right in predicting the atheistic slaughter of the 20th century after Darwin's theories were accepted.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago
Is that in comparison to the bloody rampages of the Mongols, Huns, Aztecs, Vikings, Assyrians, which happened long before the publication of The Origin of Species? Were these the theistic slaughters?



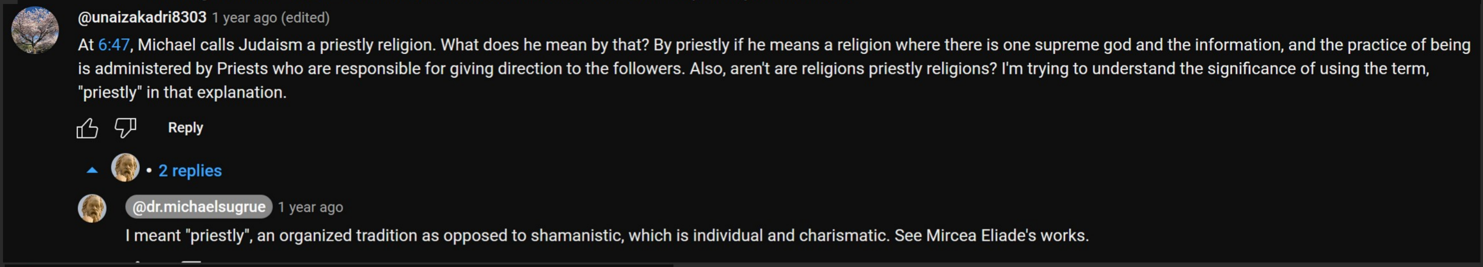
@andyzar1177 2 years ago
I am sure the audience automatically seems themselves as The Warriors hahah, warriors with pencils, good luck living in such a world.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Dad nodded and said the Warriors is an under appreciated classic movie. Literally classic, It is obviously a remake of Xenophon's Anabasis, the original Cyrus was the emperor of Persia who got killed, his supporters fought their way home to the Black Sea rather than Sheepshead Bay.



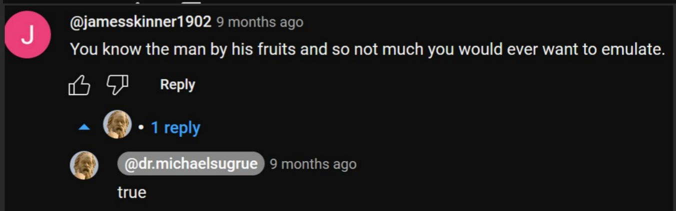
@inessaarmand7971 1 year ago
This guy is EXACTLY what Nietzsche warned us about. I want to warn you that most of these men are wrong about Friedrich. And he said that they would be.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
This is one of the most flattering things anyone has ever said about me. Nietzsche's perspectivalism means that whatever I said about Nietzsche is not in any way wrong, because perspectivalism means that neither me or you or Fred or anybody else can possibly be wrong. The unintentional irony of suggesting Fred was fretting because I needed a warning label several generations before I was born, and that all he needed was a little help from you is hilarious.



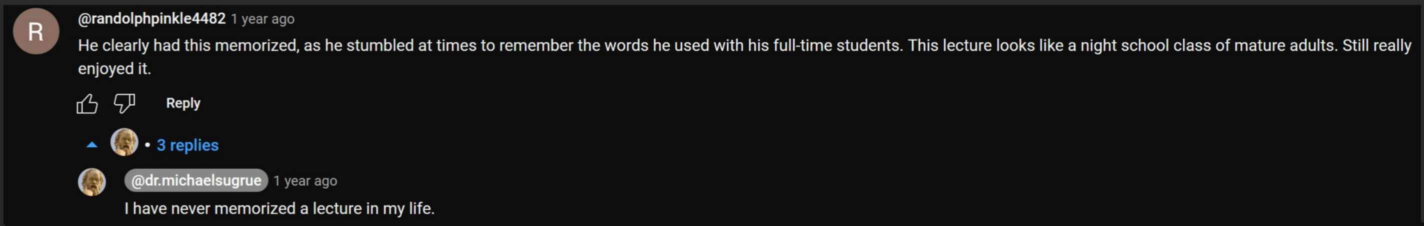
@unaizakadri8303 1 year ago (edited)
At 6:47, Michael calls Judaism a priestly religion. What does he mean by that? By priestly if he means a religion where there is one supreme god and the information, and the practice of being is administered by Priests who are responsible for giving direction to the followers. Also, aren't are religions priestly religions? I'm trying to understand the significance of using the term, "priestly" in that explanation.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
I meant "priestly", an organized tradition as opposed to shamanistic, which is individual and charismatic. See Mircea Eliade's works.



@jamesskinner1902 9 months ago
You know the man by his fruits and so not much you would ever want to emulate.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago
true

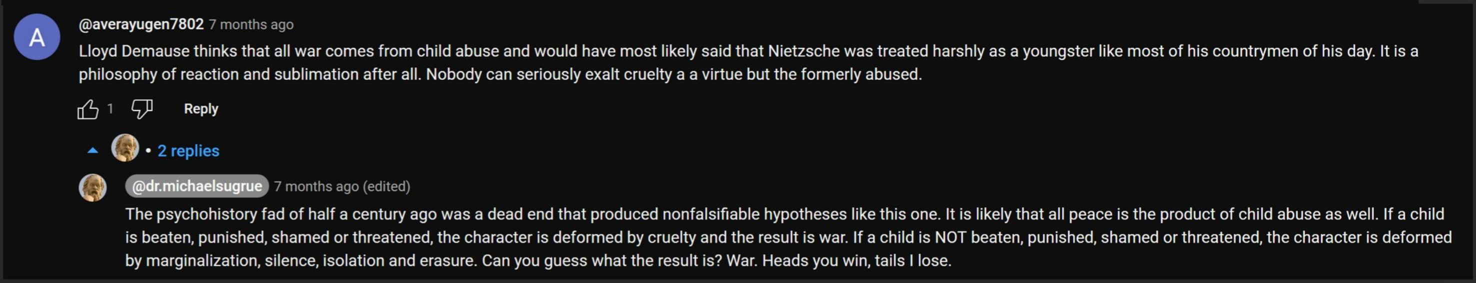


@randolphpinkle4482 1 year ago

He clearly had this memorized, as he stumbled at times to remember the words he used with his full-time students. This lecture looks like a night school class of mature adults. Still really enjoyed it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have never memorized a lecture in my life.



@averayugen7802 7 months ago

Lloyd Demause thinks that all war comes from child abuse and would have most likely said that Nietzsche was treated harshly as a youngster like most of his countrymen of his day. It is a philosophy of reaction and sublimation after all. Nobody can seriously exalt cruelty a a virtue but the formerly abused.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

The psychohistory fad of half a century ago was a dead end that produced nonfalsifiable hypotheses like this one. It is likely that all peace is the product of child abuse as well. If a child is beaten, punished, shamed or threatened, the character is deformed by cruelty and the result is war. If a child is NOT beaten, punished, shamed or threatened, the character is deformed by marginalization, silence, isolation and erasure. Can you guess what the result is? War. Heads you win, tails I lose.

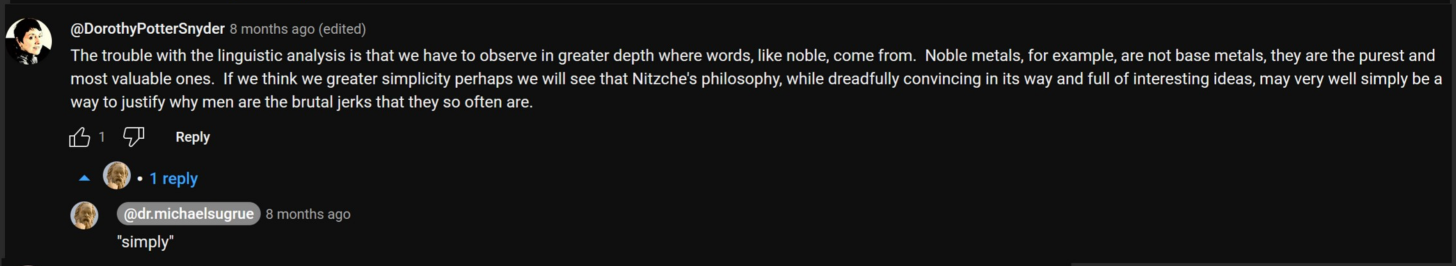
Reply
1 reply

@kgwaruka 1 year ago

I find it very interesting that people who are not Christians find themselves authoritative to speak on Christianity. I imagine myself giving a lecture about Philosophy when I have never studied or practised it. Wouldn't go down well would that?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I can imagine people studying Greek religion, Tibetan Buddhism, Nazism, Stalinism, the ideology of the Khmer Rouge, the juche idea in North Korea, Russian Lysenkoism, the historical origins of racial classifications, Chinese foot binding, Donald Trump, anti vax paranoia, phlogiston, miracles, bribery of government officials, left handed boxers, all without participating in or condoning the thing studied.

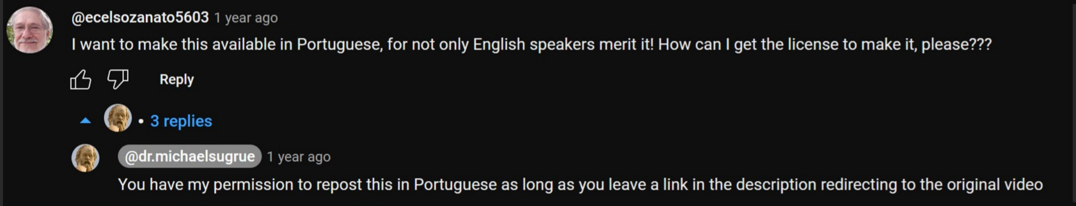


@DorothyPotterSnyder 8 months ago (edited)

The trouble with the linguistic analysis is that we have to observe in greater depth where words, like noble, come from. Noble metals, for example, are not base metals, they are the purest and most valuable ones. If we think we greater simplicity perhaps we will see that Nitzche's philosophy, while dreadfully convincing in its way and full of interesting ideas, may very well simply be a way to justify why men are the brutal jerks that they so often are.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

"simply"

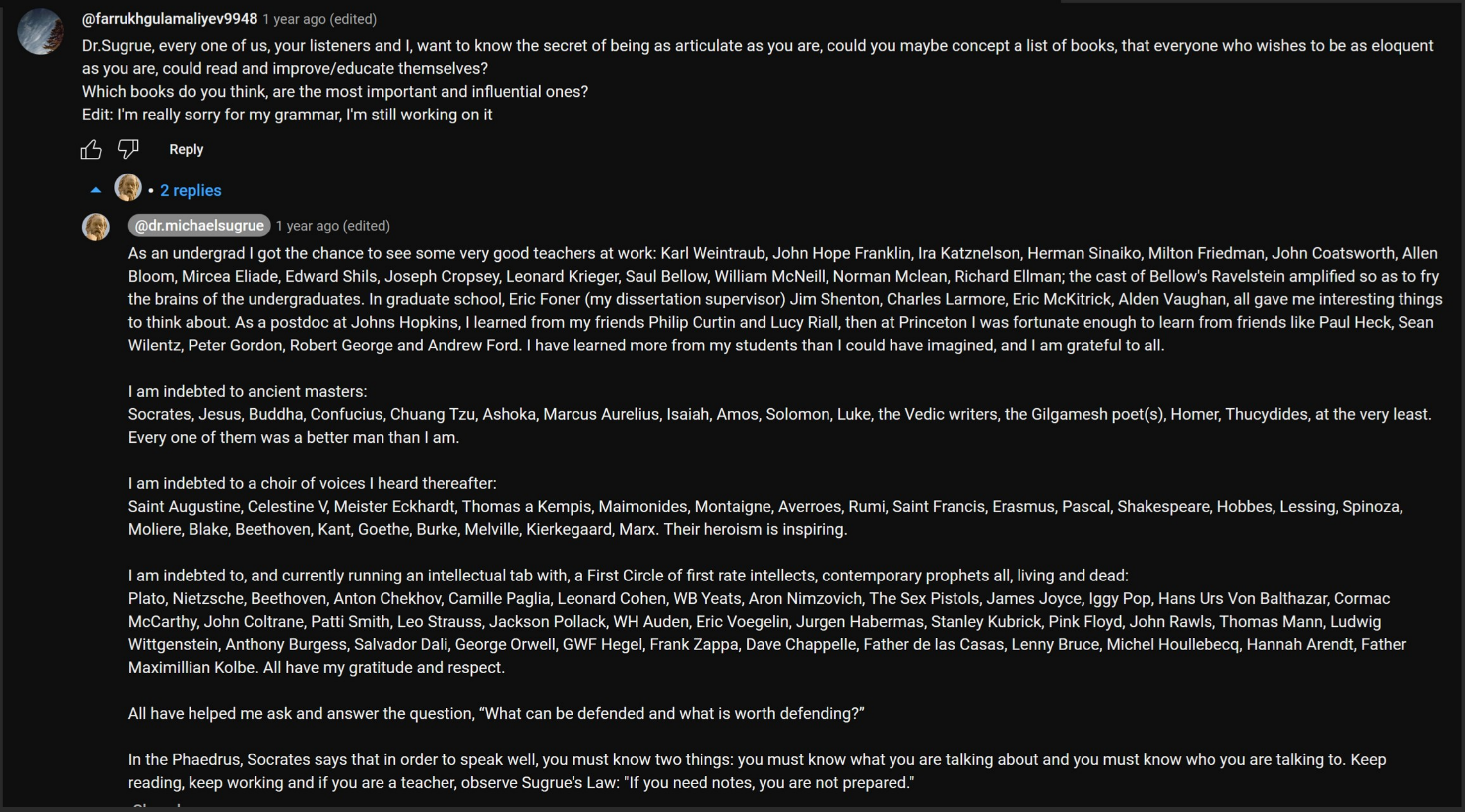


@ecelsozanato5603 1 year ago

I want to make this available in Portuguese, for not only English speakers merit it! How can I get the license to make it, please???

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You have my permission to repost this in Portuguese as long as you leave a link in the description redirecting to the original video



@farrukhgulamaliyev9948 1 year ago (edited)

Dr.Sugrue, every one of us, your listeners and I, want to know the secret of being as articulate as you are, could you maybe concept a list of books, that everyone who wishes to be as eloquent as you are, could read and improve/educate themselves?
Which books do you think, are the most important and influential ones?
Edit: I'm really sorry for my grammar, I'm still working on it

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

As an undergrad I got the chance to see some very good teachers at work: Karl Weintraub, John Hope Franklin, Ira Katznelson, Herman Sinaiko, Milton Friedman, John Coatsworth, Allen Bloom, Mircea Eliade, Edward Shils, Joseph Cropsey, Leonard Krieger, Saul Bellow, William McNeill, Norman Mclean, Richard Ellman; the cast of Bellow's Ravelstein amplified so as to fry the brains of the undergraduates. In graduate school, Eric Foner (my dissertation supervisor) Jim Shenton, Charles Larmore, Eric McKitrick, Alden Vaughan, all gave me interesting things to think about. As a postdoc at Johns Hopkins, I learned from my friends Philip Curtin and Lucy Riall, then at Princeton I was fortunate enough to learn from friends like Paul Heck, Sean Wilentz, Peter Gordon, Robert George and Andrew Ford. I have learned more from my students than I could have imagined, and I am grateful to all.

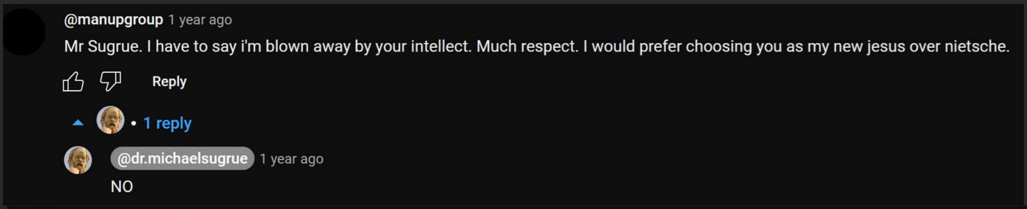
I am indebted to ancient masters:
Socrates, Jesus, Buddha, Confucius, Chuang Tzu, Ashoka, Marcus Aurelius, Isaiah, Amos, Solomon, Luke, the Vedic writers, the Gilgamesh poet(s), Homer, Thucydides, at the very least. Every one of them was a better man than I am.

I am indebted to a choir of voices I heard thereafter:
Saint Augustine, Celestine V, Meister Eckhardt, Thomas a Kempis, Maimonides, Montaigne, Averroes, Rumi, Saint Francis, Erasmus, Pascal, Shakespeare, Hobbes, Lessing, Spinoza, Moliere, Blake, Beethoven, Kant, Goethe, Burke, Melville, Kierkegaard, Marx. Their heroism is inspiring.

I am indebted to, and currently running an intellectual tab with, a First Circle of first rate intellects, contemporary prophets all, living and dead:
Plato, Nietzsche, Beethoven, Anton Chekhov, Camille Paglia, Leonard Cohen, WB Yeats, Aron Nimzovich, The Sex Pistols, James Joyce, Iggy Pop, Hans Urs Von Balthazar, Cormac McCarthy, John Coltrane, Patti Smith, Leo Strauss, Jackson Pollack, WH Auden, Eric Voegelin, Jurgen Habermas, Stanley Kubrick, Pink Floyd, John Rawls, Thomas Mann, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Anthony Burgess, Salvador Dali, George Orwell, GWF Hegel, Frank Zappa, Dave Chappelle, Father de las Casas, Lenny Bruce, Michel Houllebecq, Hannah Arendt, Father Maximillian Kolbe. All have my gratitude and respect.

All have helped me ask and answer the question, "What can be defended and what is worth defending?"

In the Phaedrus, Socrates says that in order to speak well, you must know two things: you must know what you are talking about and you must know who you are talking to. Keep reading, keep working and if you are a teacher, observe Sugrue's Law: "If you need notes, you are not prepared."



@manupgroup 1 year ago

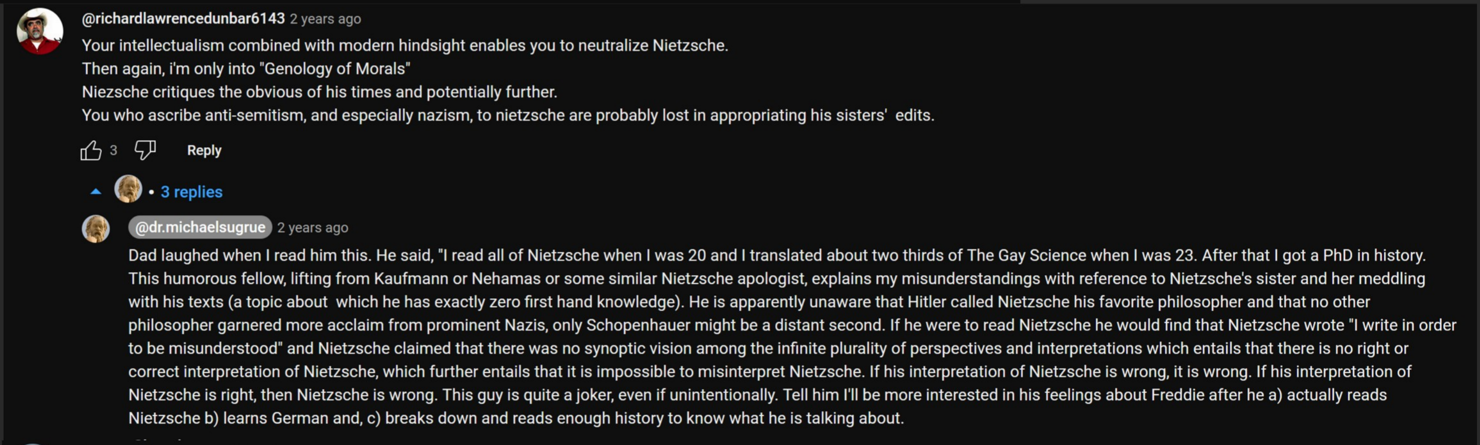
Mr Sugrue. I have to say i'm blown away by your intellect. Much respect. I would prefer choosing you as my new jesus over nietsche.

Reply

• 1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

NO



@richardlawrencedunbar6143 2 years ago

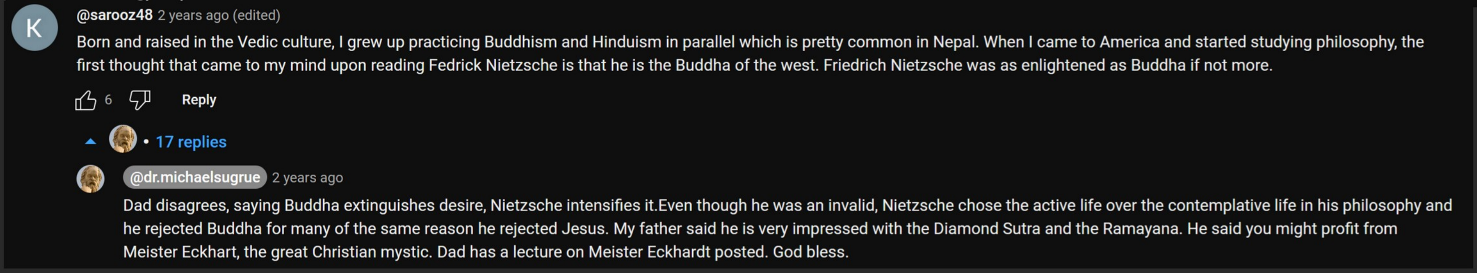
Your intellectualism combined with modern hindsight enables you to neutralize Nietzsche.
Then again, i'm only into "Genology of Morals"
Niezsche critiques the obvious of his times and potentially further.
You who ascribe anti-semitism, and especially nazism, to nietzsche are probably lost in appropriating his sisters' edits.

3 Reply

• 3 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed when I read him this. He said, "I read all of Nietzsche when I was 20 and I translated about two thirds of The Gay Science when I was 23. After that I got a PhD in history. This humorous fellow, lifting from Kaufmann or Nehamas or some similar Nietzsche apologist, explains my misunderstandings with reference to Nietzsche's sister and her meddling with his texts (a topic about which he has exactly zero first hand knowledge). He is apparently unaware that Hitler called Nietzsche his favorite philosopher and that no other philosopher garnered more acclaim from prominent Nazis, only Schopenhauer might be a distant second. If he were to read Nietzsche he would find that Nietzsche wrote "I write in order to be misunderstood" and Nietzsche claimed that there was no synoptic vision among the infinite plurality of perspectives and interpretations which entails that there is no right or correct interpretation of Nietzsche, which further entails that it is impossible to misinterpret Nietzsche. If his interpretation of Nietzsche is wrong, it is wrong. If his interpretation of Nietzsche is right, then Nietzsche is wrong. This guy is quite a joker, even if unintentionally. Tell him I'll be more interested in his feelings about Freddie after he a) actually reads Nietzsche b) learns German and, c) breaks down and reads enough history to know what he is talking about.



@sarooz48 2 years ago (edited)

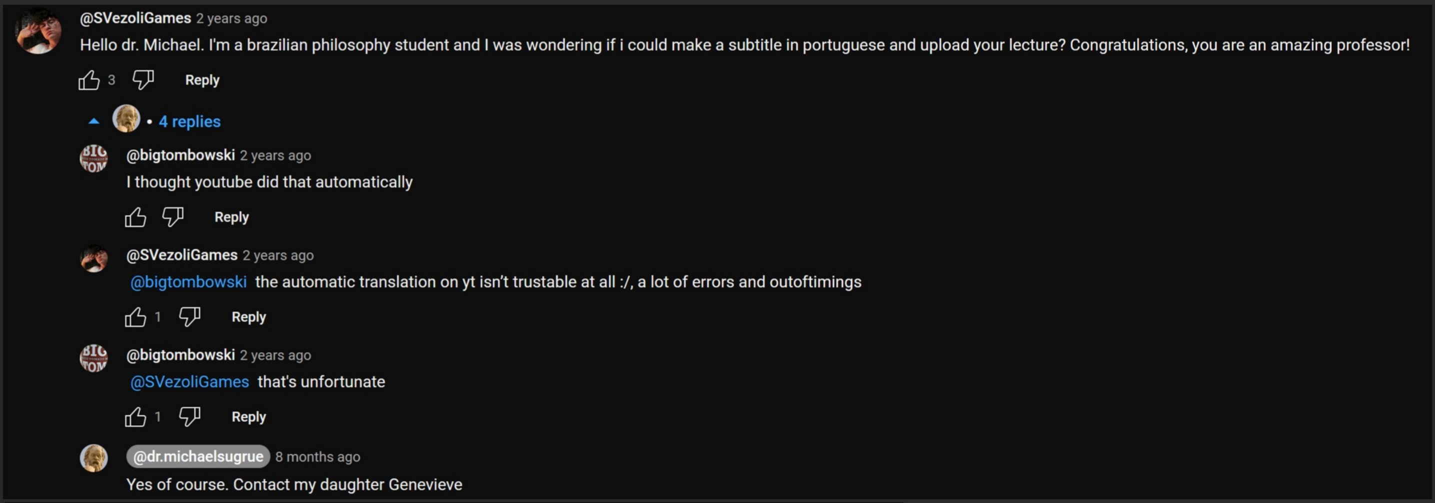
Born and raised in the Vedic culture, I grew up practicing Buddhism and Hinduism in parallel which is pretty common in Nepal. When I came to America and started studying philosophy, the first thought that came to my mind upon reading Fedrick Nietzsche is that he is the Buddha of the west. Friedrich Nietzsche was as enlightened as Buddha if not more.

6 Reply

• 17 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad disagrees, saying Buddha extinguishes desire, Nietzsche intensifies it.Even though he was an invalid, Nietzsche chose the active life over the contemplative life in his philosophy and he rejected Buddha for many of the same reason he rejected Jesus. My father said he is very impressed with the Diamond Sutra and the Ramayana. He said you might profit from Meister Eckhart, the great Christian mystic. Dad has a lecture on Meister Eckhardt posted. God bless.



@SVezoliGames 2 years ago

Hello dr. Michael. I'm a brazilian philosophy student and I was wondering if i could make a subtitle in portuguese and upload your lecture? Congratulations, you are an amazing professor!

3 Reply

• 4 replies

@bigtombowski 2 years ago

I thought youtube did that automatically

Reply

@SVezoliGames 2 years ago

@bigtombowski the automatic translation on yt isn't trustable at all :/, a lot of errors and outoftimings

1 Reply

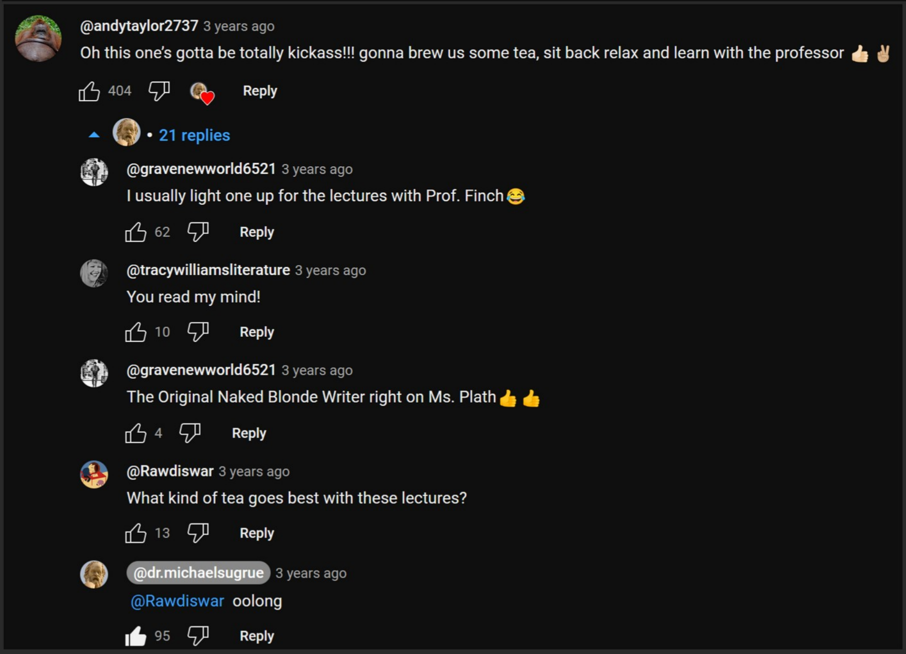
@bigtombowski 2 years ago

@SVezoliGames that's unfortunate

1 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Yes of course. Contact my daughter Genevieve



@andytaylor2737 3 years ago

Oh this one's gotta be totally kickass!!! gonna brew us some tea, sit back relax and learn with the professor 👍 ✌

404 Reply

• 21 replies

@gravenewworld6521 3 years ago

I usually light one up for the lectures with Prof. Finch😂

62 Reply

@tracywilliamsliterature 3 years ago

You read my mind!

10 Reply

@gravenewworld6521 3 years ago

The Original Naked Blonde Writer right on Ms. Plath👍 👍

4 Reply

@Rawdiswar 3 years ago

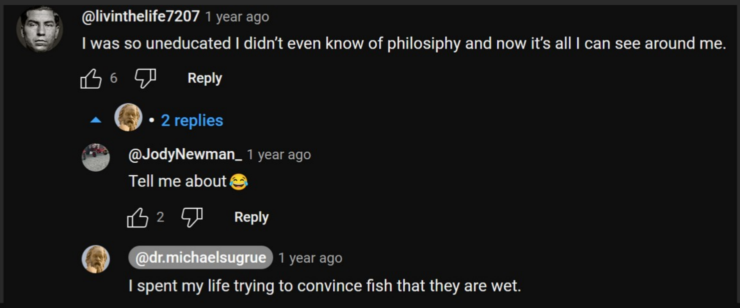
What kind of tea goes best with these lectures?

13 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

@Rawdiswar oolong

95 Reply

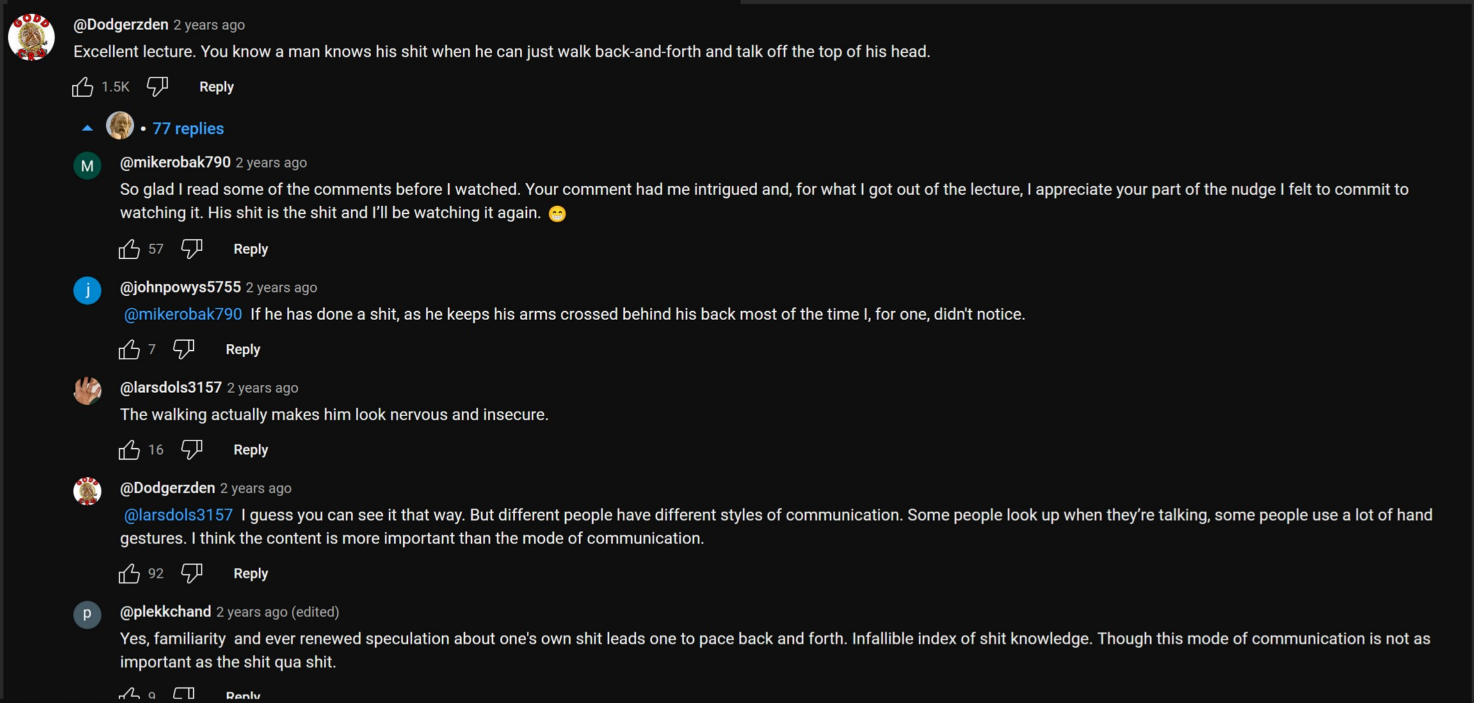


@livinthelife7207 1 year ago
I was so uneducated I didn't even know of philosiphy and now it's all I can see around me.
6 Reply

2 replies

@JodyNewman_ 1 year ago
Tell me about 😂
2 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
I spent my life trying to convince fish that they are wet.



@Dodgerzden 2 years ago
Excellent lecture. You know a man knows his shit when he can just walk back-and-forth and talk off the top of his head.
1.5K Reply

77 replies

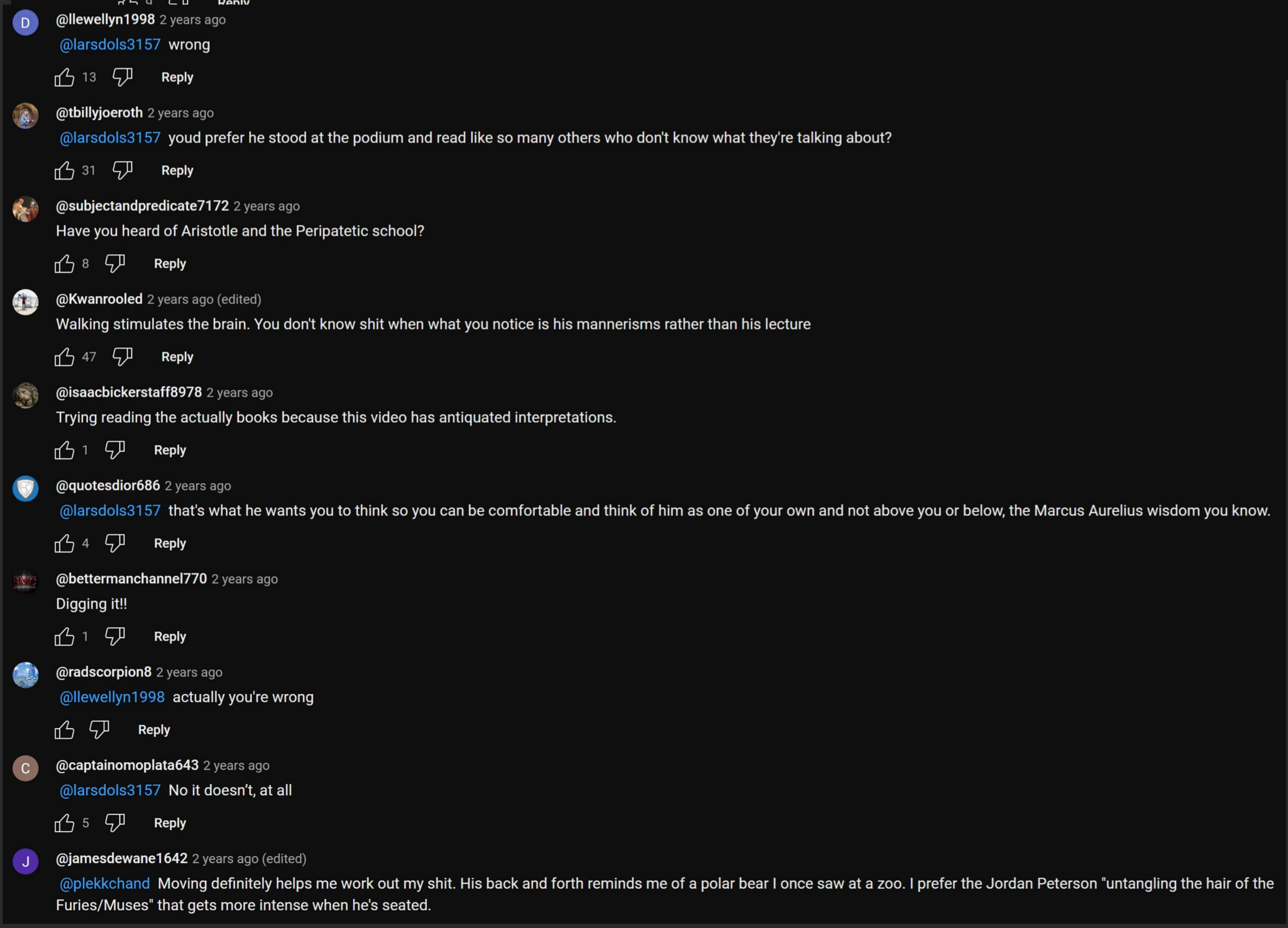
@mikerobak790 2 years ago
So glad I read some of the comments before I watched. Your comment had me intrigued and, for what I got out of the lecture, I appreciate your part of the nudge I felt to commit to watching it. His shit is the shit and I'll be watching it again. 😁
57 Reply

@johnpowys5755 2 years ago
@mikerobak790 If he has done a shit, as he keeps his arms crossed behind his back most of the time I, for one, didn't notice.
7 Reply

@larsdols3157 2 years ago
The walking actually makes him look nervous and insecure.
16 Reply

@Dodgerzden 2 years ago
@larsdols3157 I guess you can see it that way. But different people have different styles of communication. Some people look up when they're talking, some people use a lot of hand gestures. I think the content is more important than the mode of communication.
92 Reply

@plekkchand 2 years ago (edited)
Yes, familiarity and ever renewed speculation about one's own shit leads one to pace back and forth. Infallible index of shit knowledge. Though this mode of communication is not as important as the shit qua shit.
9 Reply



@llewellyn1998 2 years ago
@larsdols3157 wrong
13 Reply

@tbillyjoeroth 2 years ago
@larsdols3157 youd prefer he stood at the podium and read like so many others who don't know what they're talking about?
31 Reply

@subjectandpredicate7172 2 years ago
Have you heard of Aristotle and the Peripatetic school?
8 Reply

@Kwanrooled 2 years ago (edited)
Walking stimulates the brain. You don't know shit when what you notice is his mannerisms rather than his lecture
47 Reply

@isaacbickerstaff8978 2 years ago
Trying reading the actually books because this video has antiquated interpretations.
1 Reply

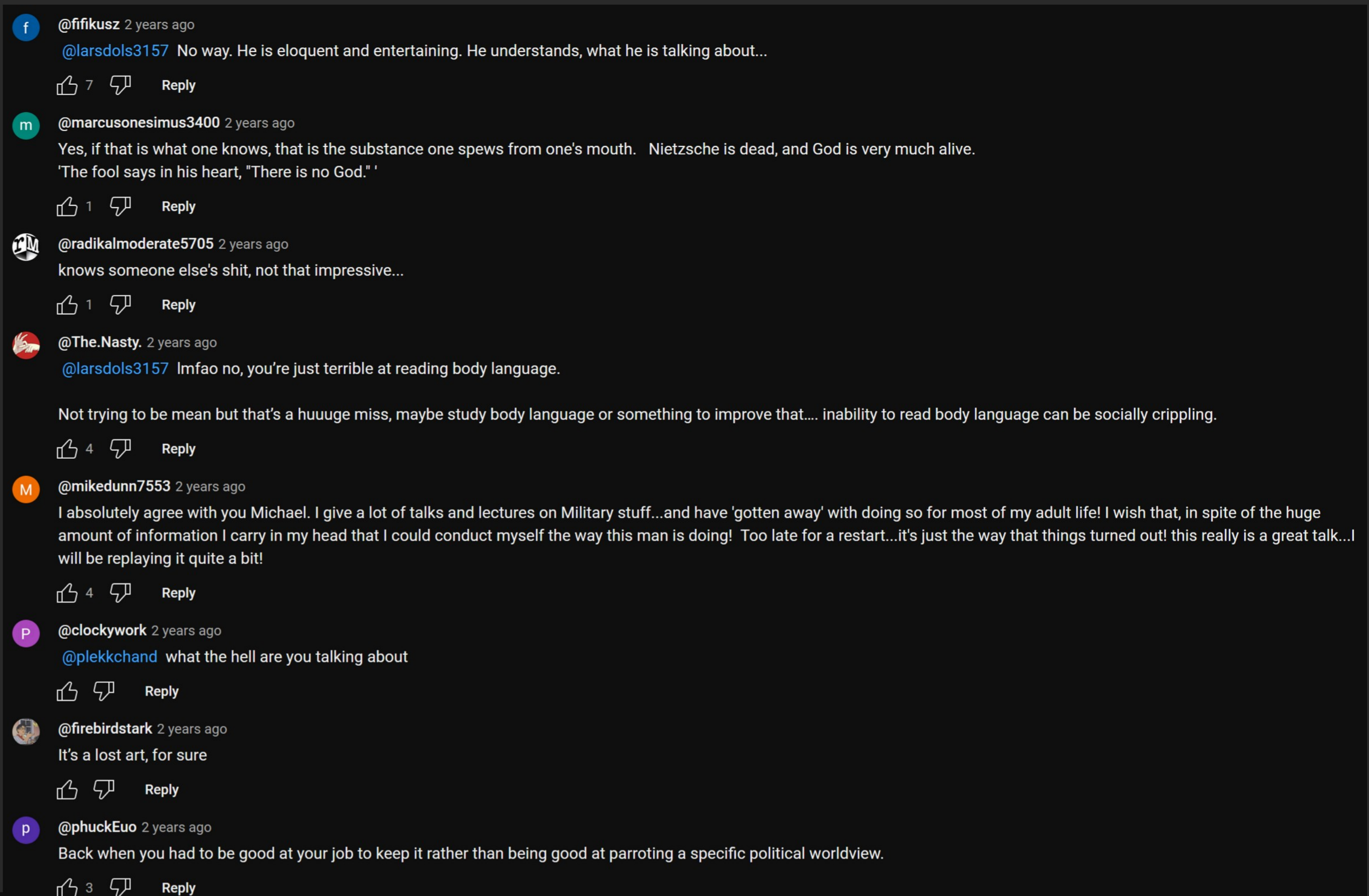
@quotesdior686 2 years ago
@larsdols3157 that's what he wants you to think so you can be comfortable and think of him as one of your own and not above you or below, the Marcus Aurelius wisdom you know.
4 Reply

@bettermanchannel770 2 years ago
Digging it!!
1 Reply

@radscorpion8 2 years ago
@llewellyn1998 actually you're wrong
Reply

@captainomoplata643 2 years ago
@larsdols3157 No it doesn't, at all
5 Reply

@jamesdewane1642 2 years ago (edited)
@plekkchand Moving definitely helps me work out my shit. His back and forth reminds me of a polar bear I once saw at a zoo. I prefer the Jordan Peterson "untangling the hair of the Furies/Muses" that gets more intense when he's seated.



@fifikusz 2 years ago

@larsdols3157 No way. He is eloquent and entertaining. He understands, what he is talking about...

7 Reply

@marcusonesimus3400 2 years ago

Yes, if that is what one knows, that is the substance one spews from one's mouth. Nietzsche is dead, and God is very much alive.
'The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." '

1 Reply

@radikalmoderate5705 2 years ago

knows someone else's shit, not that impressive...

1 Reply

@The.Nasty. 2 years ago

@larsdols3157 lmfao no, you're just terrible at reading body language.

Not trying to be mean but that's a huuuge miss, maybe study body language or something to improve that.... inability to read body language can be socially crippling.

4 Reply

@mikedunn7553 2 years ago

I absolutely agree with you Michael. I give a lot of talks and lectures on Military stuff...and have 'gotten away' with doing so for most of my adult life! I wish that, in spite of the huge amount of information I carry in my head that I could conduct myself the way this man is doing! Too late for a restart...it's just the way that things turned out! this really is a great talk...I will be replaying it quite a bit!

4 Reply

@clockywork 2 years ago

@plekkchand what the hell are you talking about

Reply

@firebirdstark 2 years ago

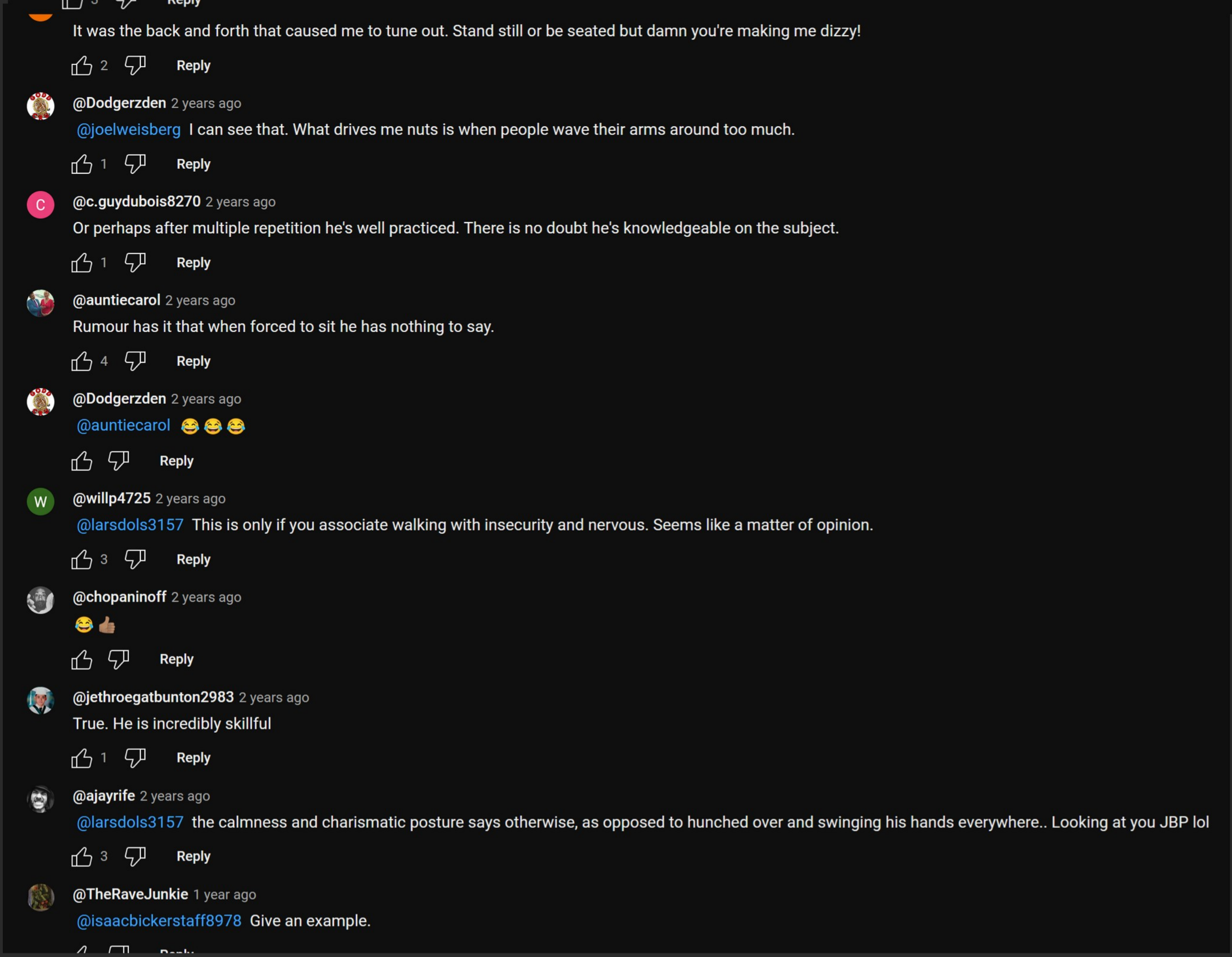
It's a lost art, for sure

Reply

@phuckEuo 2 years ago

Back when you had to be good at your job to keep it rather than being good at parroting a specific political worldview.

3 Reply



It was the back and forth that caused me to tune out. Stand still or be seated but damn you're making me dizzy!

2 Reply

@Dodgerzden 2 years ago

@joelweisberg I can see that. What drives me nuts is when people wave their arms around too much.

1 Reply

@c.guydubois8270 2 years ago

Or perhaps after multiple repetition he's well practiced. There is no doubt he's knowledgeable on the subject.

1 Reply

@auntiecarol 2 years ago

Rumour has it that when forced to sit he has nothing to say.

4 Reply

@Dodgerzden 2 years ago

@auntiecarol 😂😂😂

Reply

@willp4725 2 years ago

@larsdols3157 This is only if you associate walking with insecurity and nervous. Seems like a matter of opinion.

3 Reply

@chopaninoff 2 years ago

😂👍🏽

Reply

@jethroegatbunton2983 2 years ago

True. He is incredibly skillful

1 Reply

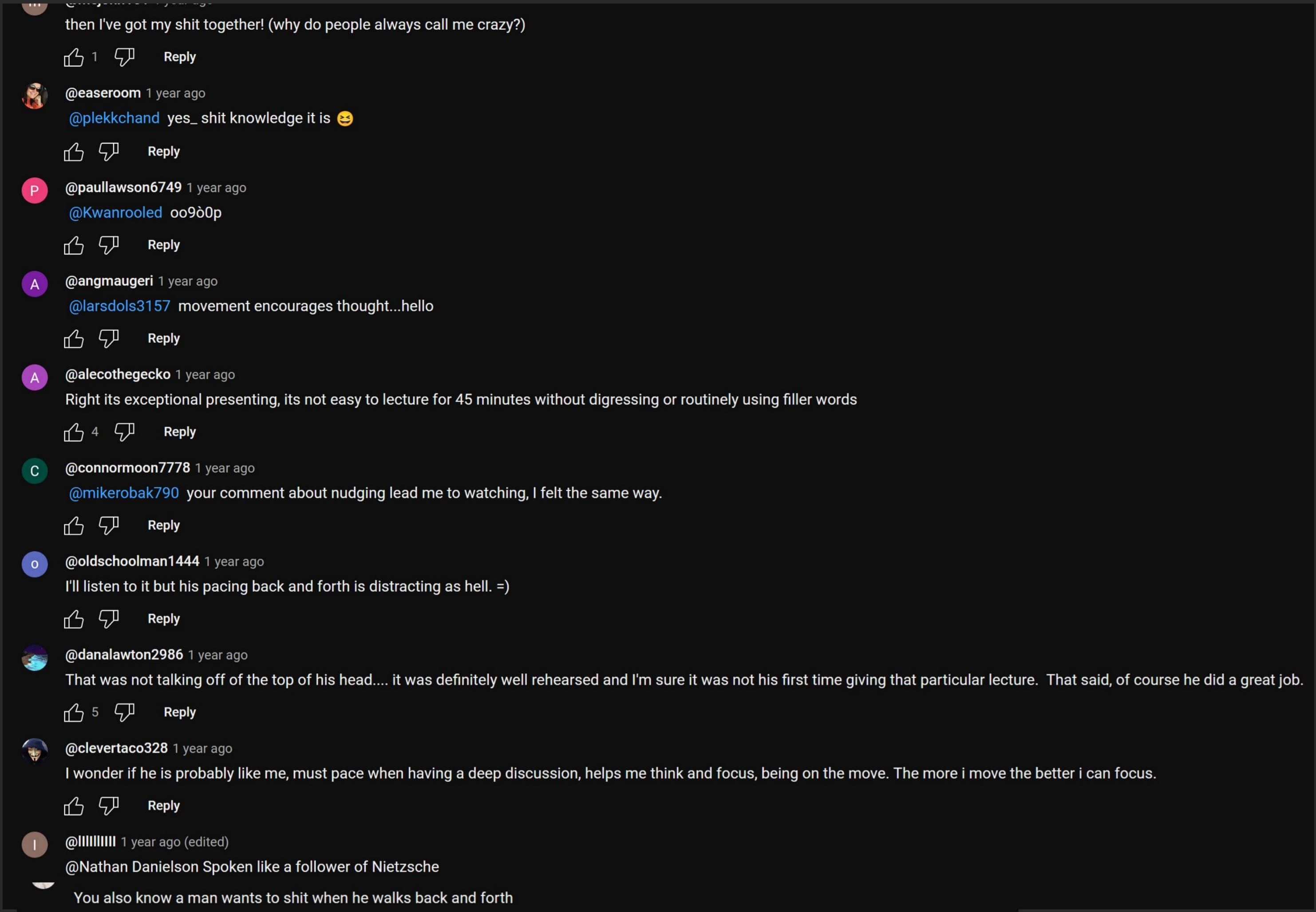
@ajayrife 2 years ago

@larsdols3157 the calmness and charismatic posture says otherwise, as opposed to hunched over and swinging his hands everywhere.. Looking at you JBP lol

3 Reply

@TheRaveJunkie 1 year ago

@isaacbickerstaff8978 Give an example.



then I've got my shit together! (why do people always call me crazy?)

1 Reply

@easeroom 1 year ago

@plekkchand yes_ shit knowledge it is 😆

Reply

@paullawson6749 1 year ago

@Kwanrooled oo9ò0p

Reply

@angmaugeri 1 year ago

@larsdols3157 movement encourages thought...hello

Reply

@alecothegecko 1 year ago

Right its exceptional presenting, its not easy to lecture for 45 minutes without digressing or routinely using filler words

4 Reply

@connormoon7778 1 year ago

@mikerobak790 your comment about nudging lead me to watching, I felt the same way.

Reply

@oldschoolman1444 1 year ago

I'll listen to it but his pacing back and forth is distracting as hell. =)

Reply

@danalawton2986 1 year ago

That was not talking off of the top of his head.... it was definitely well rehearsed and I'm sure it was not his first time giving that particular lecture. That said, of course he did a great job.

5 Reply

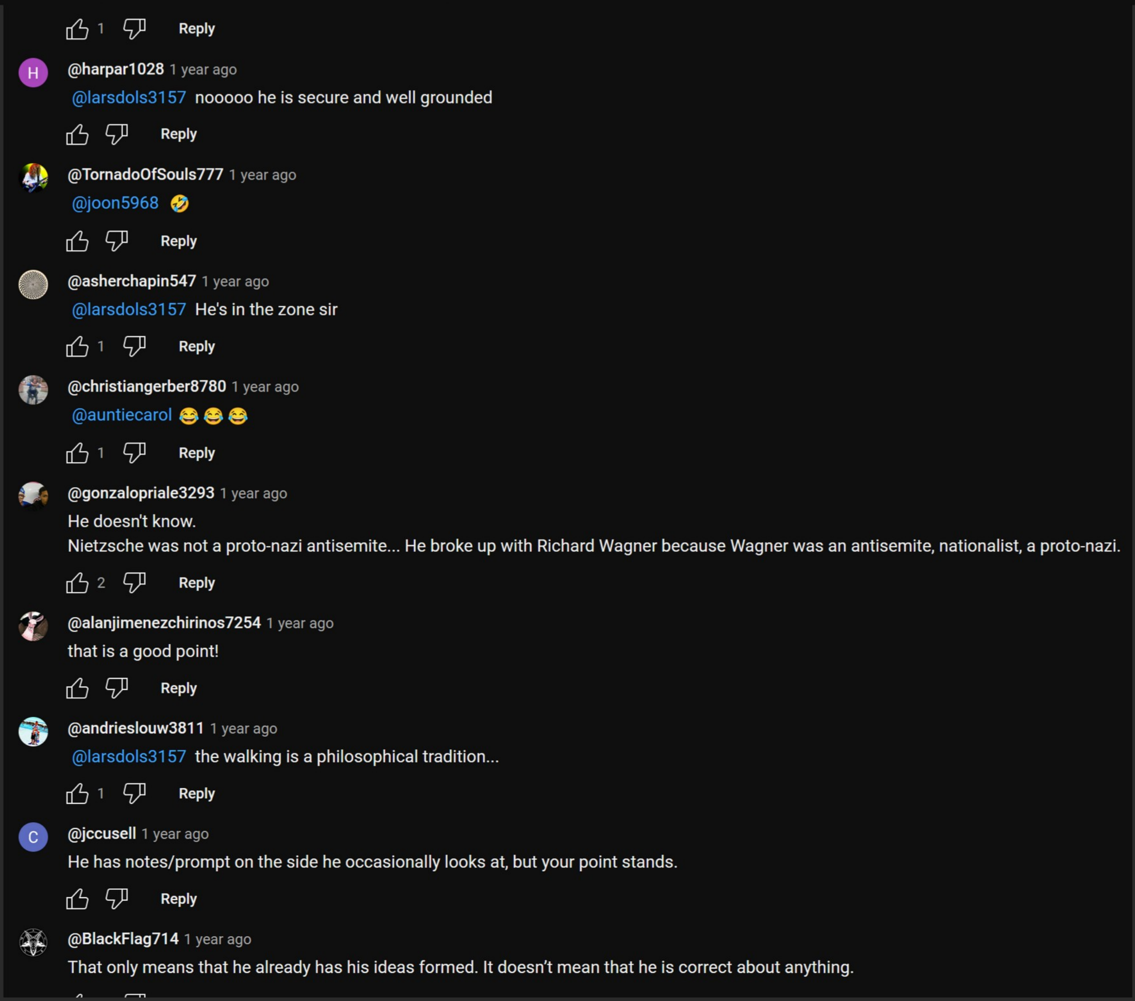
@clevertaco328 1 year ago

I wonder if he is probably like me, must pace when having a deep discussion, helps me think and focus, being on the move. The more i move the better i can focus.

Reply

@lllllllllll 1 year ago (edited)

@Nathan Danielson Spoken like a follower of Nietzsche



You also know a man wants to shit when he walks back and forth

1 Reply

@harpar1028 1 year ago

@larsdols3157 nooooo he is secure and well grounded

Reply

@TornadoOfSouls777 1 year ago

@joon5968 🤣

Reply

@asherchapin547 1 year ago

@larsdols3157 He's in the zone sir

1 Reply

@christiangerber8780 1 year ago

@auntiecarol 😂😂😂

1 Reply

@gonzalopriale3293 1 year ago

He doesn't know.
Nietzsche was not a proto-nazi antisemite... He broke up with Richard Wagner because Wagner was an antisemite, nationalist, a proto-nazi.

2 Reply

@alanjimenezchirinos7254 1 year ago

that is a good point!

Reply

@andrieslouw3811 1 year ago

@larsdols3157 the walking is a philosophical tradition...

1 Reply

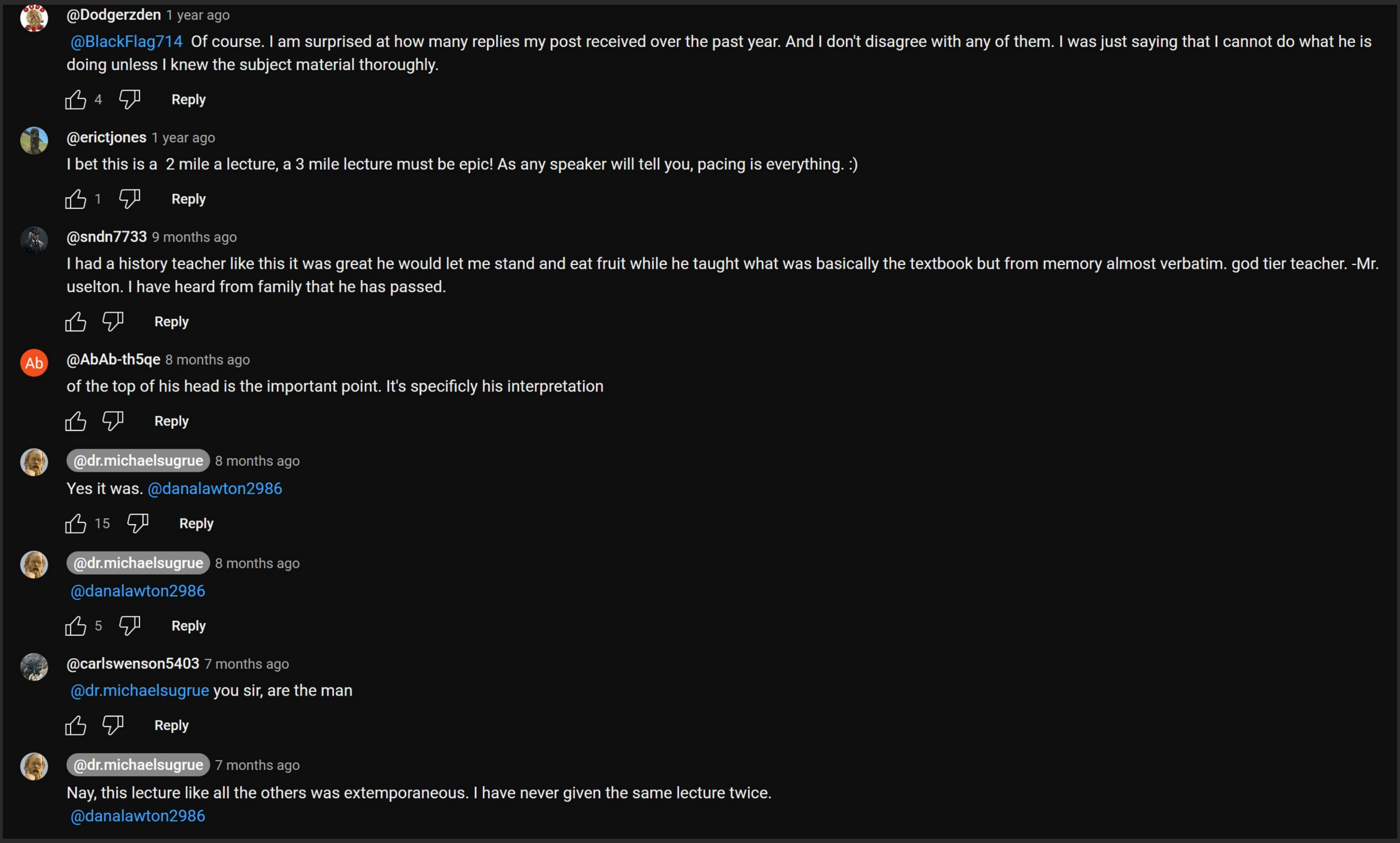
@jccusell 1 year ago

He has notes/prompt on the side he occasionally looks at, but your point stands.

Reply

@BlackFlag714 1 year ago

That only means that he already has his ideas formed. It doesn't mean that he is correct about anything.



@Dodgerzden 1 year ago

@BlackFlag714 Of course. I am surprised at how many replies my post received over the past year. And I don't disagree with any of them. I was just saying that I cannot do what he is doing unless I knew the subject material thoroughly.

@erictjones 1 year ago

I bet this is a 2 mile a lecture, a 3 mile lecture must be epic! As any speaker will tell you, pacing is everything. :)

@sndn7733 9 months ago

I had a history teacher like this it was great he would let me stand and eat fruit while he taught what was basically the textbook but from memory almost verbatim. god tier teacher. -Mr. uselton. I have heard from family that he has passed.

@AbAb-th5qe 8 months ago

of the top of his head is the important point. It's specificly his interpretation

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Yes it was. @danalawton2986

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

@danalawton2986

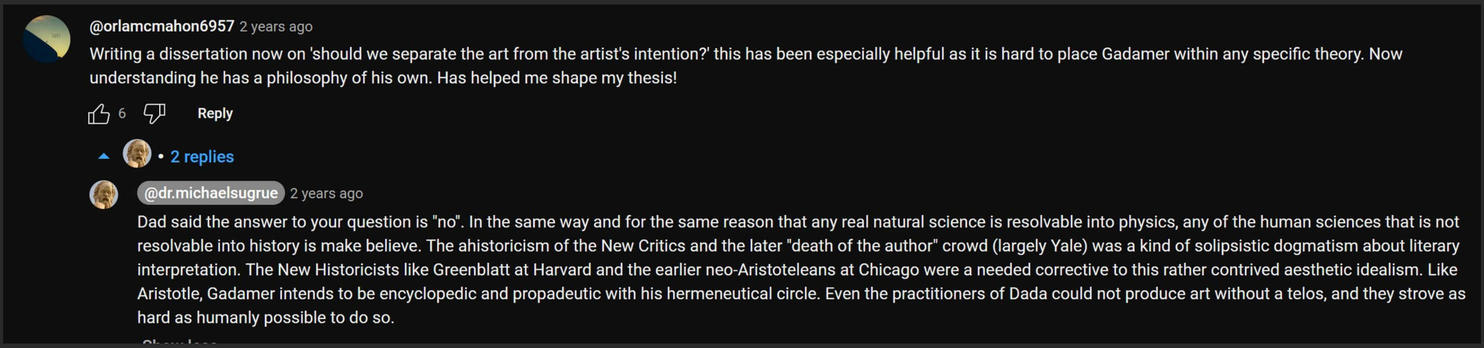
@carlswenson5403 7 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue you sir, are the man

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Nay, this lecture like all the others was extemporaneous. I have never given the same lecture twice. @danalawton2986

Gadamer: Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences



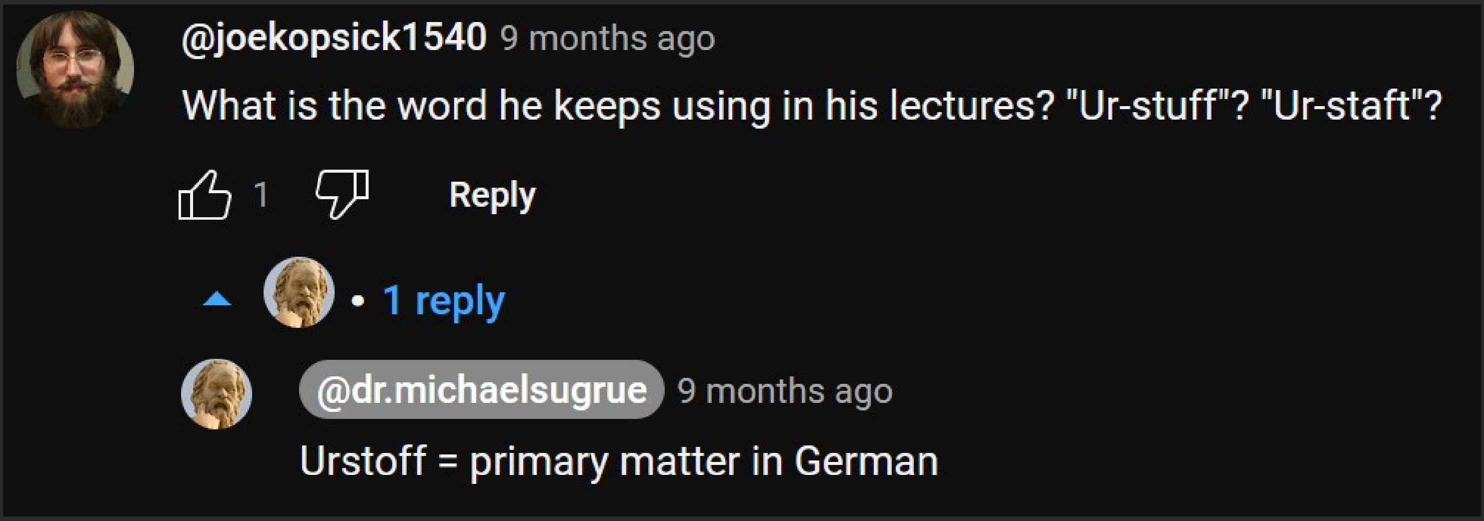
@orlamcmahon6957 2 years ago

Writing a dissertation now on 'should we separate the art from the artist's intention?' this has been especially helpful as it is hard to place Gadamer within any specific theory. Now understanding he has a philosophy of his own. Has helped me shape my thesis!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said the answer to your question is "no". In the same way and for the same reason that any real natural science is resolvable into physics, any of the human sciences that is not resolvable into history is make believe. The ahistoricism of the New Critics and the later "death of the author" crowd (largely Yale) was a kind of solipsistic dogmatism about literary interpretation. The New Historicists like Greenblatt at Harvard and the earlier neo-Aristoteleans at Chicago were a needed corrective to this rather contrived aesthetic idealism. Like Aristotle, Gadamer intends to be encyclopedic and propadeutic with his hermeneutical circle. Even the practitioners of Dada could not produce art without a telos, and they strove as hard as humanly possible to do so.

Bergson's Elan Vital and Vitalism



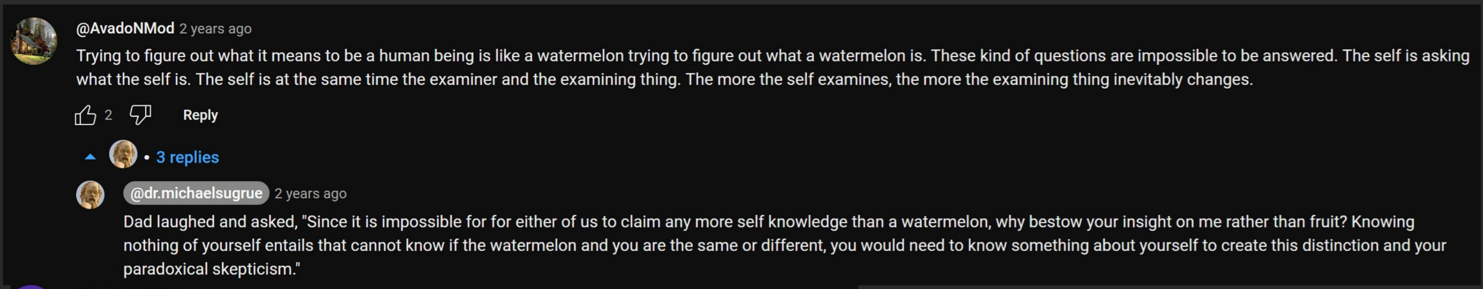
@joekopsick1540 9 months ago

What is the word he keeps using in his lectures? "Ur-stuff"? "Ur-staft"?

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Urstoff = primary matter in German

Husserl: Phenomenology and the Life World

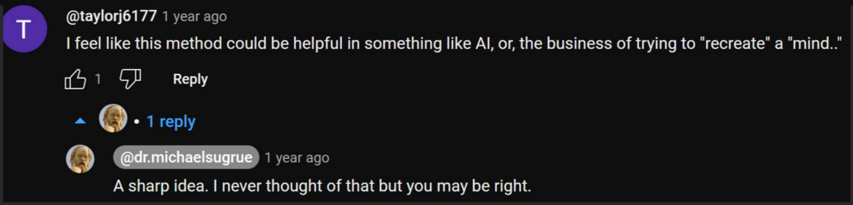


@AvadoNMod 2 years ago

Trying to figure out what it means to be a human being is like a watermelon trying to figure out what a watermelon is. These kind of questions are impossible to be answered. The self is asking what the self is. The self is at the same time the examiner and the examining thing. The more the self examines, the more the examining thing inevitably changes.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed and asked, "Since it is impossible for for either of us to claim any more self knowledge than a watermelon, why bestow your insight on me rather than fruit? Knowing nothing of yourself entails that cannot know if the watermelon and you are the same or different, you would need to know something about yourself to create this distinction and your paradoxical skepticism."

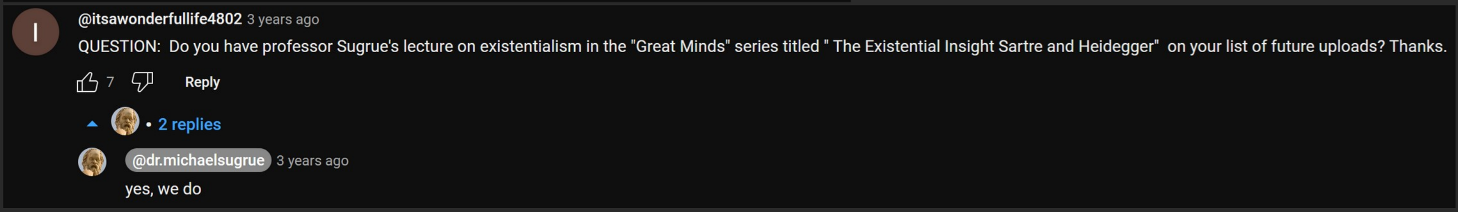


@taylorj6177 1 year ago

I feel like this method could be helpful in something like AI, or, the business of trying to "recreate" a "mind.."

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A sharp idea. I never thought of that but you may be right.



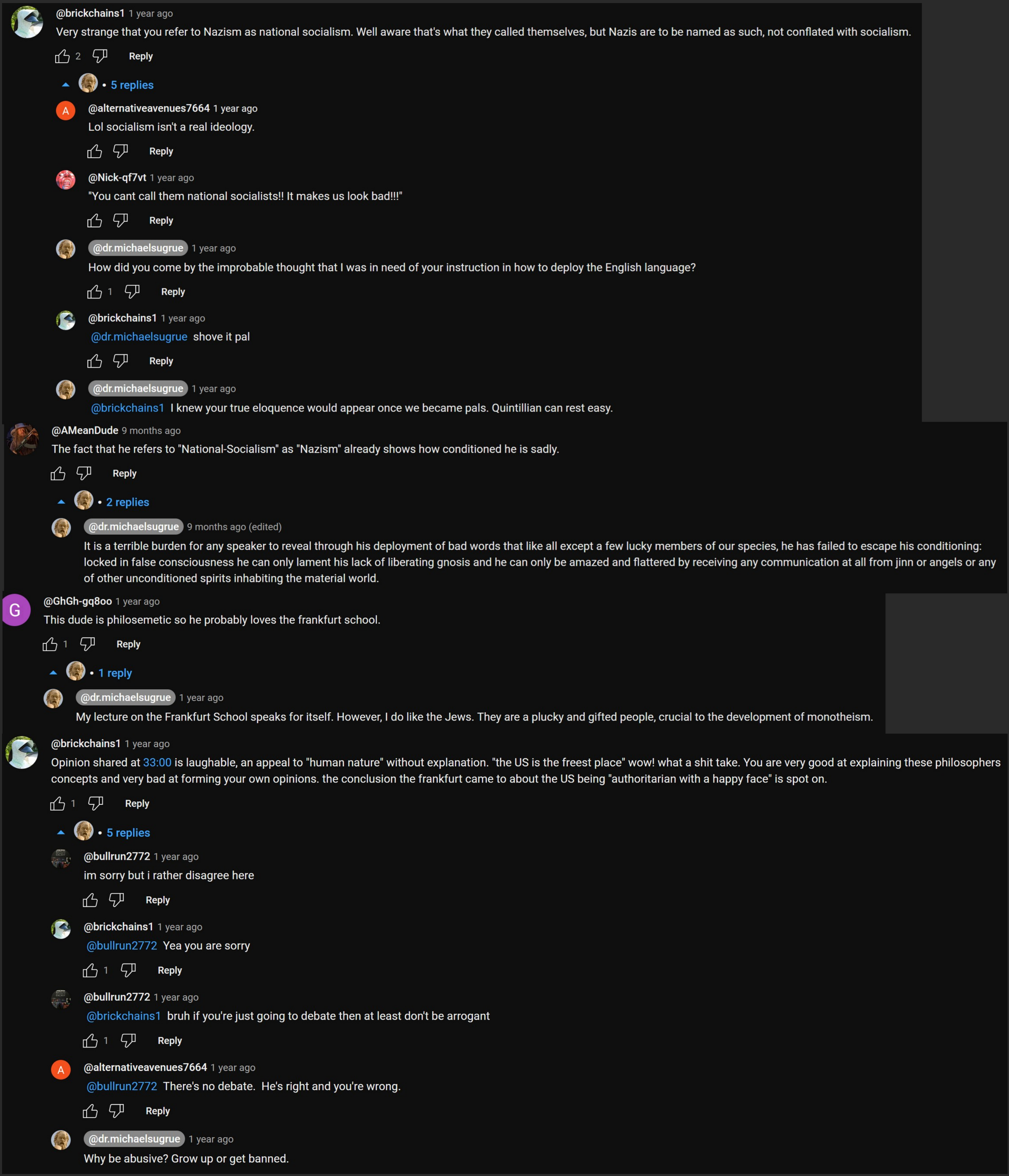
@itsawonderfullife4802 3 years ago

QUESTION: Do you have professor Sugrue's lecture on existentialism in the "Great Minds" series titled " The Existential Insight Sartre and Heidegger" on your list of future uploads? Thanks.

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

yes, we do

The Frankfurt School



@brickchains1 1 year ago
Very strange that you refer to Nazism as national socialism. Well aware that's what they called themselves, but Nazis are to be named as such, not conflated with socialism.

5 replies

@alternativeavenues7664 1 year ago
Lol socialism isn't a real ideology.

@Nick-qf7vt 1 year ago
"You cant call them national socialists!! It makes us look bad!!!"

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
How did you come by the improbable thought that I was in need of your instruction in how to deploy the English language?

@brickchains1 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue shove it pal

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
@brickchains1 I knew your true eloquence would appear once we became pals. Quintillian can rest easy.

@AMeanDude 9 months ago
The fact that he refers to "National-Socialism" as "Nazism" already shows how conditioned he is sadly.

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)
It is a terrible burden for any speaker to reveal through his deployment of bad words that like all except a few lucky members of our species, he has failed to escape his conditioning: locked in false consciousness he can only lament his lack of liberating gnosis and he can only be amazed and flattered by receiving any communication at all from jinn or angels or any of other unconditioned spirits inhabiting the material world.

@GhGh-gq8oo 1 year ago
This dude is philosemetic so he probably loves the frankfurt school.

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
My lecture on the Frankfurt School speaks for itself. However, I do like the Jews. They are a plucky and gifted people, crucial to the development of monotheism.

@brickchains1 1 year ago
Opinion shared at 33:00 is laughable, an appeal to "human nature" without explanation. "the US is the freest place" wow! what a shit take. You are very good at explaining these philosophers concepts and very bad at forming your own opinions. the conclusion the frankfurt came to about the US being "authoritarian with a happy face" is spot on.

5 replies

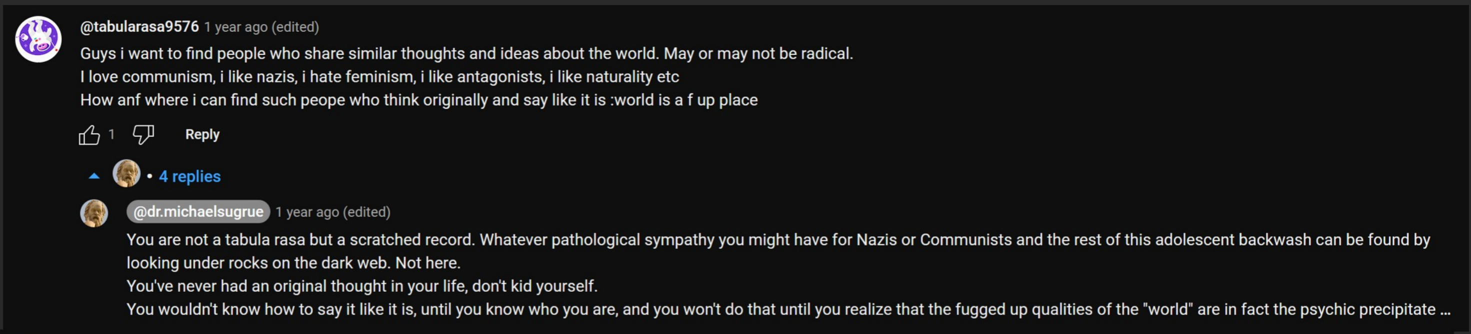
@bullrun2772 1 year ago
im sorry but i rather disagree here

@brickchains1 1 year ago
@bullrun2772 Yea you are sorry

@bullrun2772 1 year ago
@brickchains1 bruh if you're just going to debate then at least don't be arrogant

@alternativeavenues7664 1 year ago
@bullrun2772 There's no debate. He's right and you're wrong.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Why be abusive? Grow up or get banned.

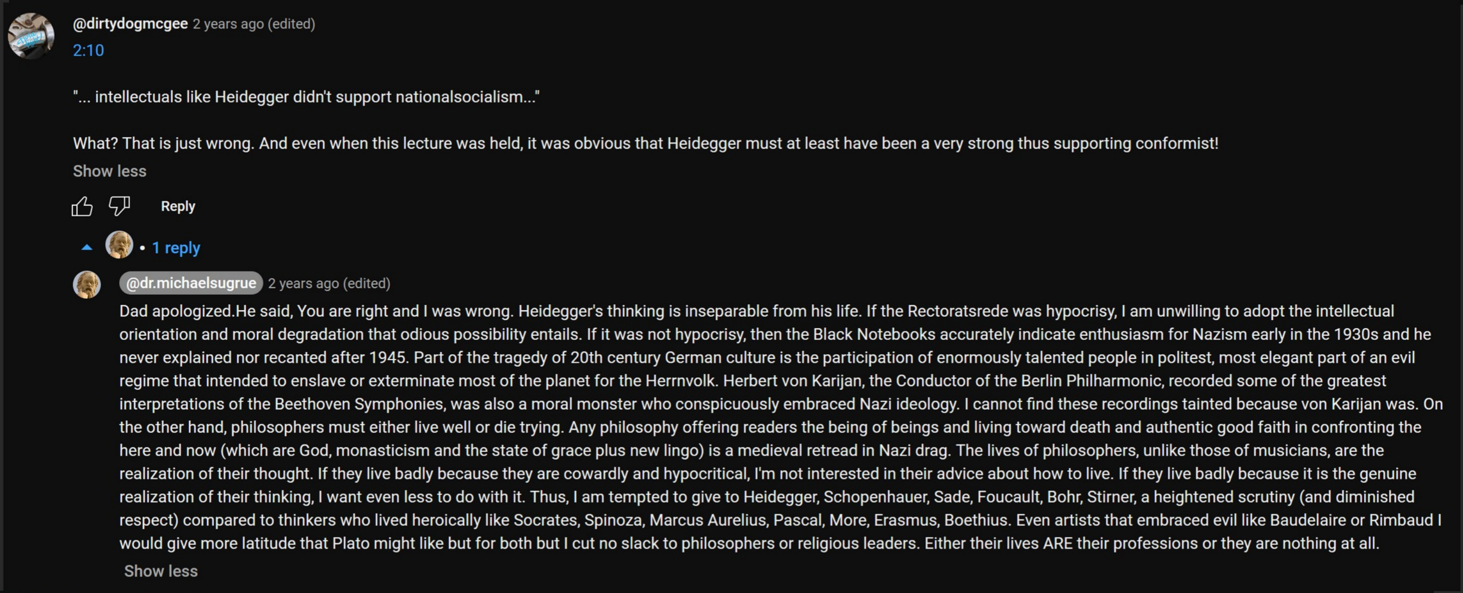


@tabularasa9576 1 year ago (edited)

Guys i want to find people who share similar thoughts and ideas about the world. May or may not be radical.
I love communism, i like nazis, i hate feminism, i like antagonists, i like naturality etc
How anf where i can find such peope who think originally and say like it is :world is a f up place

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

You are not a tabula rasa but a scratched record. Whatever pathological sympathy you might have for Nazis or Communists and the rest of this adolescent backwash can be found by looking under rocks on the dark web. Not here.
You've never had an original thought in your life, don't kid yourself.
You wouldn't know how to say it like it is, until you know who you are, and you won't do that until you realize that the fugged up qualities of the "world" are in fact the psychic precipitate ...



@dirtydogmcgee 2 years ago (edited)

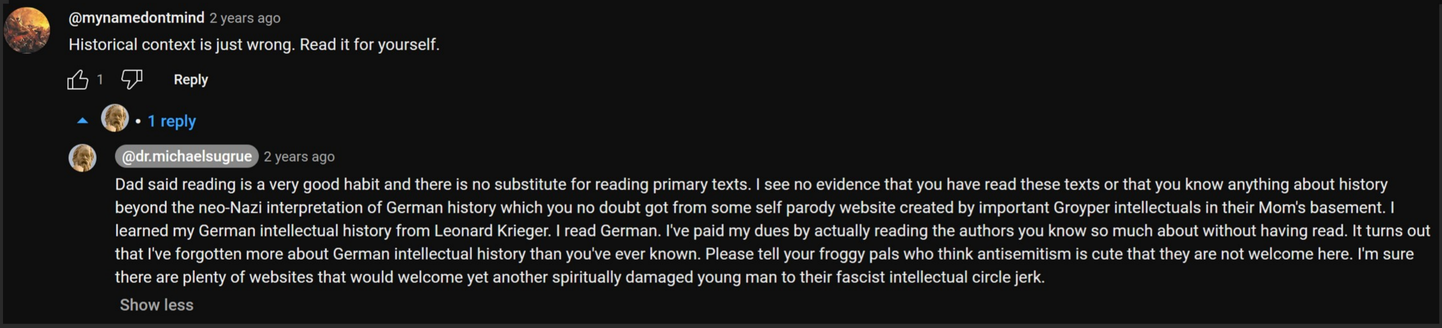
2:10

"... intellectuals like Heidegger didn't support nationalsocialism..."

What? That is just wrong. And even when this lecture was held, it was obvious that Heidegger must at least have been a very strong thus supporting conformist!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad apologized.He said, You are right and I was wrong. Heidegger's thinking is inseparable from his life. If the Rectoratsrede was hypocrisy, I am unwilling to adopt the intellectual orientation and moral degradation that odious possibility entails. If it was not hypocrisy, then the Black Notebooks accurately indicate enthusiasm for Nazism early in the 1930s and he never explained nor recanted after 1945. Part of the tragedy of 20th century German culture is the participation of enormously talented people in politest, most elegant part of an evil regime that intended to enslave or exterminate most of the planet for the Herrnvolk. Herbert von Karijan, the Conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, recorded some of the greatest interpretations of the Beethoven Symphonies, was also a moral monster who conspicuously embraced Nazi ideology. I cannot find these recordings tainted because von Karijan was. On the other hand, philosophers must either live well or die trying. Any philosophy offering readers the being of beings and living toward death and authentic good faith in confronting the here and now (which are God, monasticism and the state of grace plus new lingo) is a medieval retread in Nazi drag. The lives of philosophers, unlike those of musicians, are the realization of their thought. If they live badly because they are cowardly and hypocritical, I'm not interested in their advice about how to live. If they live badly because it is the genuine realization of their thinking, I want even less to do with it. Thus, I am tempted to give to Heidegger, Schopenhauer, Sade, Foucault, Bohr, Stirner, a heightened scrutiny (and diminished respect) compared to thinkers who lived heroically like Socrates, Spinoza, Marcus Aurelius, Pascal, More, Erasmus, Boethius. Even artists that embraced evil like Baudelaire or Rimbaud I would give more latitude that Plato might like but for both but I cut no slack to philosophers or religious leaders. Either their lives ARE their professions or they are nothing at all.

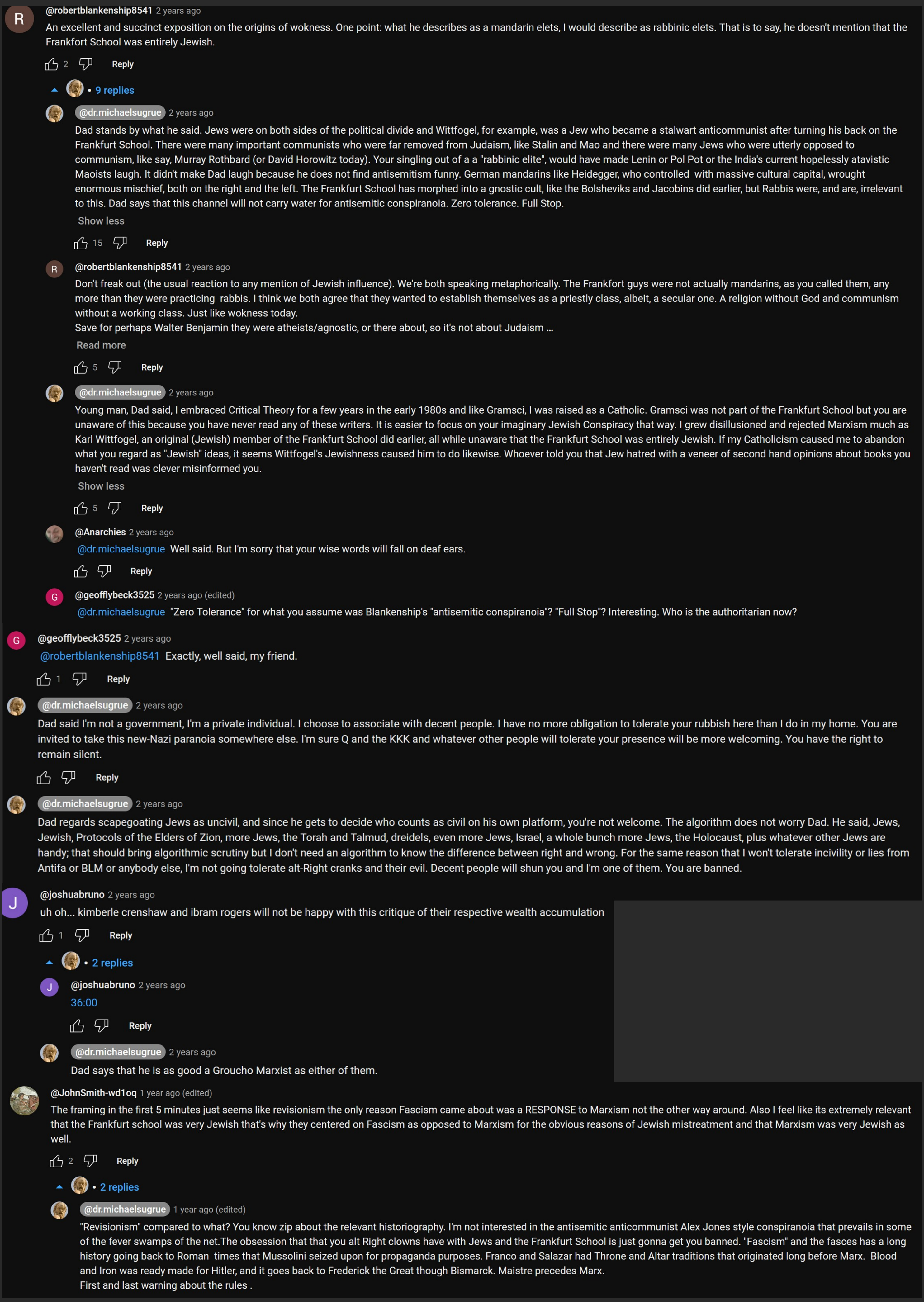


@mynamedontmind 2 years ago

Historical context is just wrong. Read it for yourself.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said reading is a very good habit and there is no substitute for reading primary texts. I see no evidence that you have read these texts or that you know anything about history beyond the neo-Nazi interpretation of German history which you no doubt got from some self parody website created by important Groyper intellectuals in their Mom's basement. I learned my German intellectual history from Leonard Krieger. I read German. I've paid my dues by actually reading the authors you know so much about without having read. It turns out that I've forgotten more about German intellectual history than you've ever known. Please tell your froggy pals who think antisemitism is cute that they are not welcome here. I'm sure there are plenty of websites that would welcome yet another spiritually damaged young man to their fascist intellectual circle jerk.



@robertblankenship8541 2 years ago

An excellent and succinct exposition on the origins of wokness. One point: what he describes as a mandarin elets, I would describe as rabbinic elets. That is to say, he doesn't mention that the Frankfort School was entirely Jewish.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad stands by what he said. Jews were on both sides of the political divide and Wittfogel, for example, was a Jew who became a stalwart anticommunist after turning his back on the Frankfurt School. There were many important communists who were far removed from Judaism, like Stalin and Mao and there were many Jews who were utterly opposed to communism, like say, Murray Rothbard (or David Horowitz today). Your singling out of a a "rabbinic elite", would have made Lenin or Pol Pot or the India's current hopelessly atavistic Maoists laugh. It didn't make Dad laugh because he does not find antisemitism funny. German mandarins like Heidegger, who controlled with massive cultural capital, wrought enormous mischief, both on the right and the left. The Frankfurt School has morphed into a gnostic cult, like the Bolsheviks and Jacobins did earlier, but Rabbis were, and are, irrelevant to this. Dad says that this channel will not carry water for antisemitic conspiranoia. Zero tolerance. Full Stop.

@robertblankenship8541 2 years ago

Don't freak out (the usual reaction to any mention of Jewish influence). We're both speaking metaphorically. The Frankfort guys were not actually mandarins, as you called them, any more than they were practicing rabbis. I think we both agree that they wanted to establish themselves as a priestly class, albeit, a secular one. A religion without God and communism without a working class. Just like wokness today.
Save for perhaps Walter Benjamin they were atheists/agnostic, or there about, so it's not about Judaism ...

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Young man, Dad said, I embraced Critical Theory for a few years in the early 1980s and like Gramsci, I was raised as a Catholic. Gramsci was not part of the Frankfurt School but you are unaware of this because you have never read any of these writers. It is easier to focus on your imaginary Jewish Conspiracy that way. I grew disillusioned and rejected Marxism much as Karl Wittfogel, an original (Jewish) member of the Frankfurt School did earlier, all while unaware that the Frankfurt School was entirely Jewish. If my Catholicism caused me to abandon what you regard as "Jewish" ideas, it seems Wittfogel's Jewishness caused him to do likewise. Whoever told you that Jew hatred with a veneer of second hand opinions about books you haven't read was clever misinformed you.

@Anarchies 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Well said. But I'm sorry that your wise words will fall on deaf ears.

@geofflybeck3525 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue "Zero Tolerance" for what you assume was Blankenship's "antisemitic conspiranoia"? "Full Stop"? Interesting. Who is the authoritarian now?

@geofflybeck3525 2 years ago

@robertblankenship8541 Exactly, well said, my friend.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said I'm not a government, I'm a private individual. I choose to associate with decent people. I have no more obligation to tolerate your rubbish here than I do in my home. You are invited to take this new-Nazi paranoia somewhere else. I'm sure Q and the KKK and whatever other people will tolerate your presence will be more welcoming. You have the right to remain silent.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad regards scapegoating Jews as uncivil, and since he gets to decide who counts as civil on his own platform, you're not welcome. The algorithm does not worry Dad. He said, Jews, Jewish, Protocols of the Elders of Zion, more Jews, the Torah and Talmud, dreidels, even more Jews, Israel, a whole bunch more Jews, the Holocaust, plus whatever other Jews are handy; that should bring algorithmic scrutiny but I don't need an algorithm to know the difference between right and wrong. For the same reason that I won't tolerate incivility or lies from Antifa or BLM or anybody else, I'm not going tolerate alt-Right cranks and their evil. Decent people will shun you and I'm one of them. You are banned.

@joshuabruno 2 years ago

uh oh... kimberle crenshaw and ibram rogers will not be happy with this critique of their respective wealth accumulation

@joshuabruno 2 years ago

36:00

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

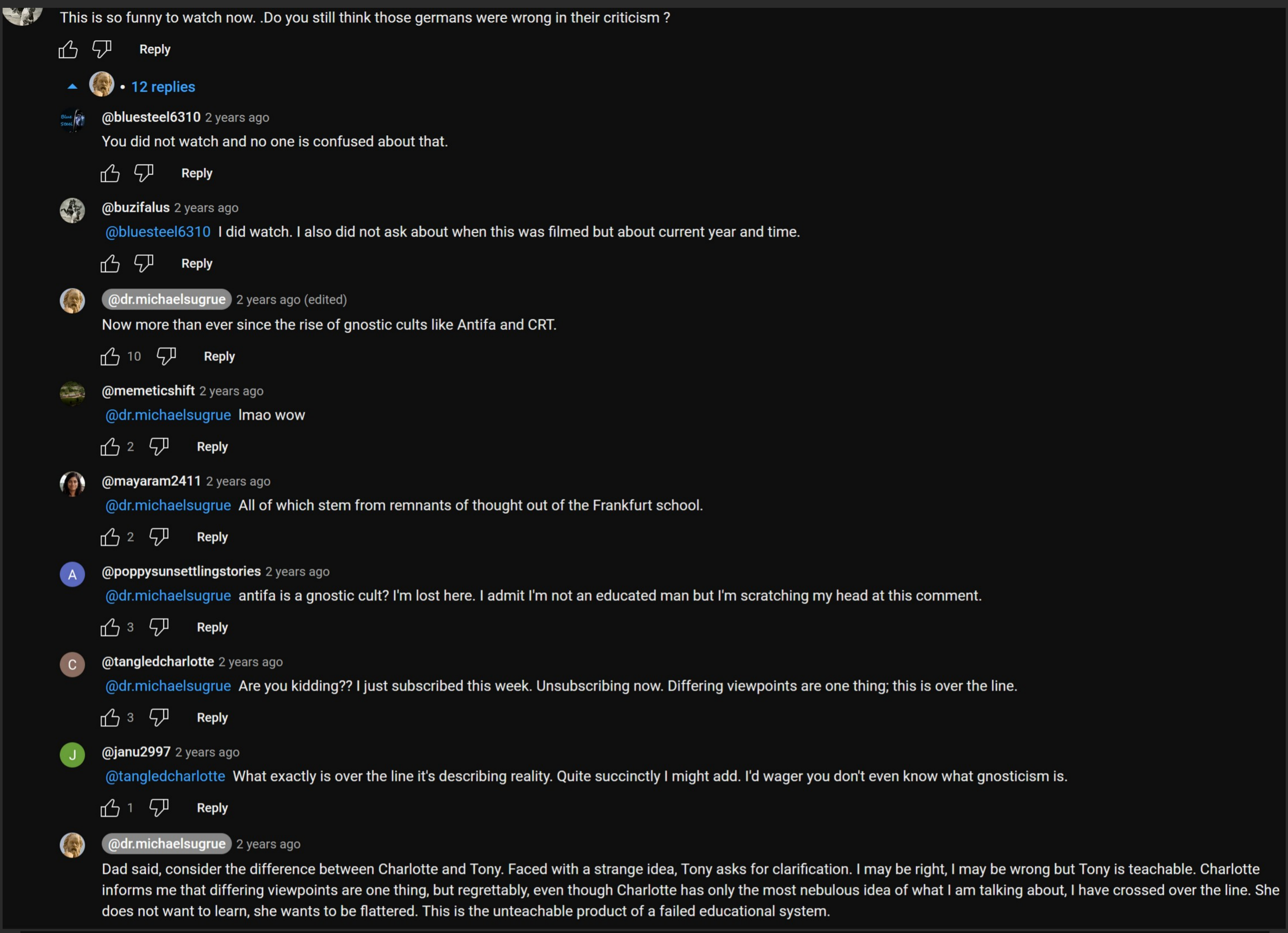
Dad says that he is as good a Groucho Marxist as either of them.

@JohnSmith-wd1oq 1 year ago (edited)

The framing in the first 5 minutes just seems like revisionism the only reason Fascism came about was a RESPONSE to Marxism not the other way around. Also I feel like its extremely relevant that the Frankfurt school was very Jewish that's why they centered on Fascism as opposed to Marxism for the obvious reasons of Jewish mistreatment and that Marxism was very Jewish as well.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

"Revisionism" compared to what? You know zip about the relevant historiography. I'm not interested in the antisemitic anticommunist Alex Jones style conspiranoia that prevails in some of the fever swamps of the net.The obsession that that you alt Right clowns have with Jews and the Frankfurt School is just gonna get you banned. "Fascism" and the fasces has a long history going back to Roman times that Mussolini seized upon for propaganda purposes. Franco and Salazar had Throne and Altar traditions that originated long before Marx. Blood and Iron was ready made for Hitler, and it goes back to Frederick the Great though Bismarck. Maistre precedes Marx.
First and last warning about the rules .



This is so funny to watch now. .Do you still think those germans were wrong in their criticism ?

@bluesteel6310 2 years ago

You did not watch and no one is confused about that.

@buzifalus 2 years ago

@bluesteel6310 I did watch. I also did not ask about when this was filmed but about current year and time.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Now more than ever since the rise of gnostic cults like Antifa and CRT.

@memeticshift 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue lmao wow

@mayaram2411 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue All of which stem from remnants of thought out of the Frankfurt school.

@poppysunsettlingstories 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue antifa is a gnostic cult? I'm lost here. I admit I'm not an educated man but I'm scratching my head at this comment.

@tangledcharlotte 2 years ago

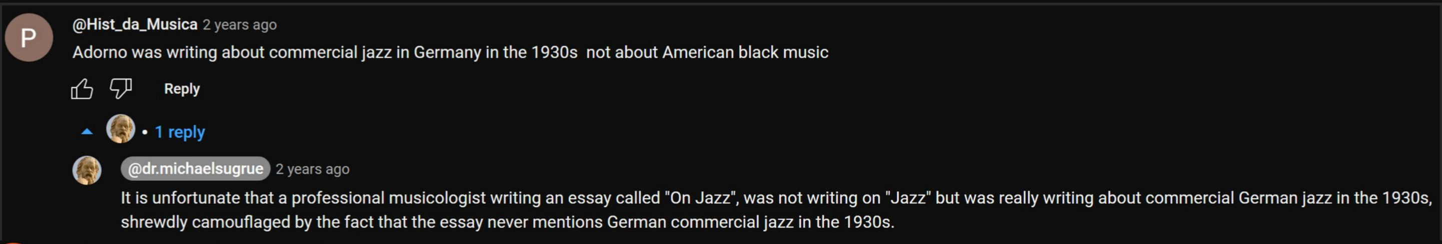
@dr.michaelsugrue Are you kidding?? I just subscribed this week. Unsubscribing now. Differing viewpoints are one thing; this is over the line.

@janu2997 2 years ago

@tangledcharlotte What exactly is over the line it's describing reality. Quite succinctly I might add. I'd wager you don't even know what gnosticism is.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, consider the difference between Charlotte and Tony. Faced with a strange idea, Tony asks for clarification. I may be right, I may be wrong but Tony is teachable. Charlotte informs me that differing viewpoints are one thing, but regrettably, even though Charlotte has only the most nebulous idea of what I am talking about, I have crossed over the line. She does not want to learn, she wants to be flattered. This is the unteachable product of a failed educational system.

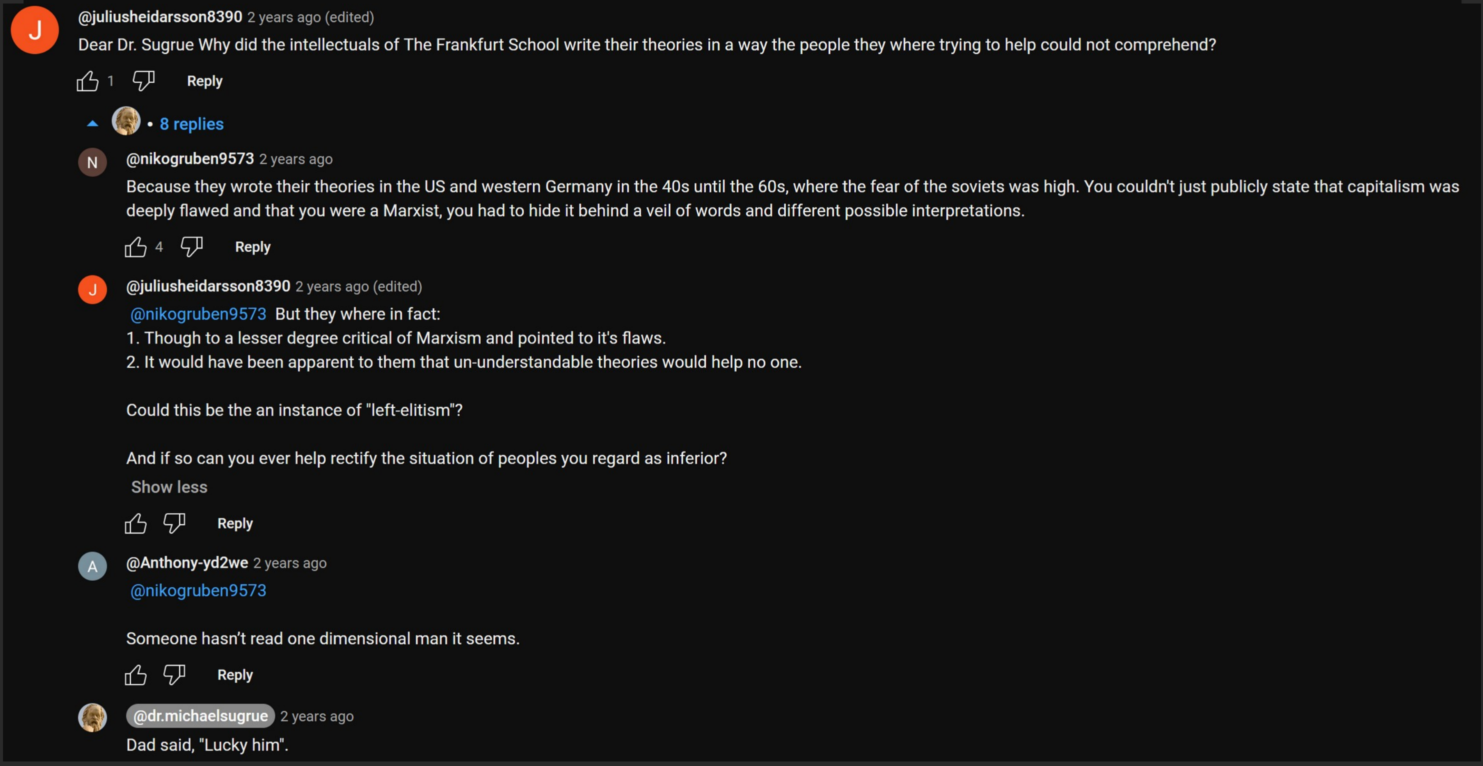


@Hist_da_Musica 2 years ago

Adorno was writing about commercial jazz in Germany in the 1930s not about American black music

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

It is unfortunate that a professional musicologist writing an essay called "On Jazz", was not writing on "Jazz" but was really writing about commercial German jazz in the 1930s, shrewdly camouflaged by the fact that the essay never mentions German commercial jazz in the 1930s.



@juliusheidarsson8390 2 years ago (edited)

Dear Dr. Sugrue Why did the intellectuals of The Frankfurt School write their theories in a way the people they where trying to help could not comprehend?

@nikogruben9573 2 years ago

Because they wrote their theories in the US and western Germany in the 40s until the 60s, where the fear of the soviets was high. You couldn't just publicly state that capitalism was deeply flawed and that you were a Marxist, you had to hide it behind a veil of words and different possible interpretations.

@juliusheidarsson8390 2 years ago (edited)

@nikogruben9573 But they where in fact:
1. Though to a lesser degree critical of Marxism and pointed to it's flaws.
2. It would have been apparent to them that un-understandable theories would help no one.

Could this be the an instance of "left-elitism"?

And if so can you ever help rectify the situation of peoples you regard as inferior?

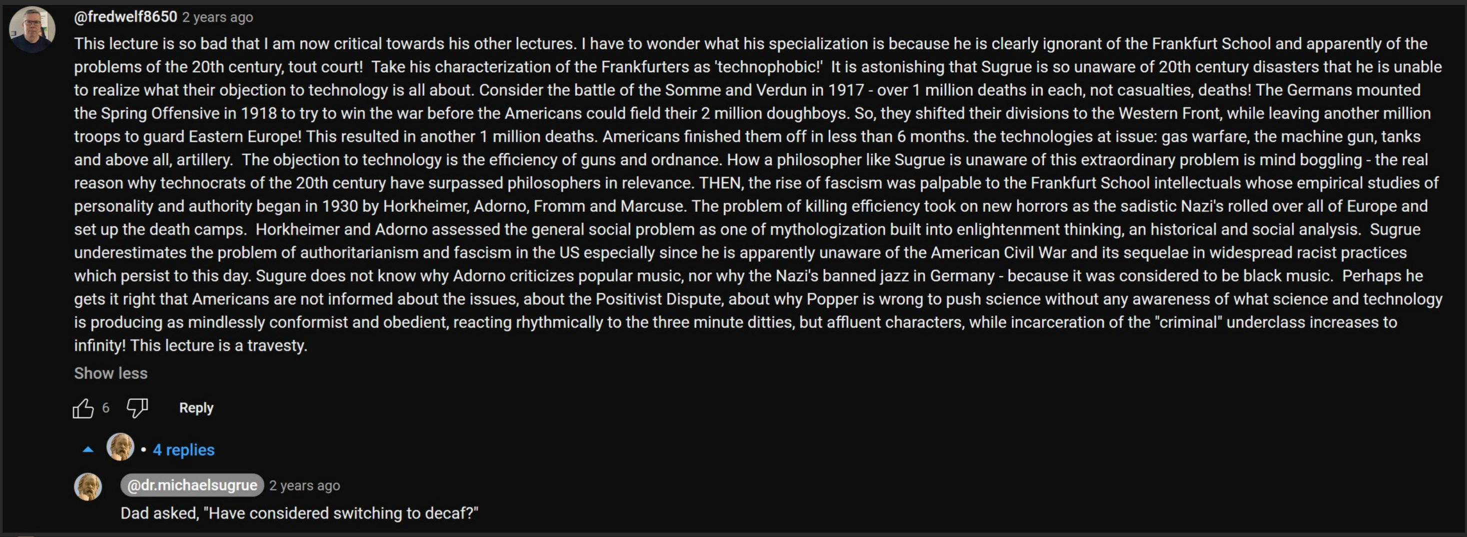
@Anthony-yd2we 2 years ago

@nikogruben9573

Someone hasn't read one dimensional man it seems.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, "Lucky him".

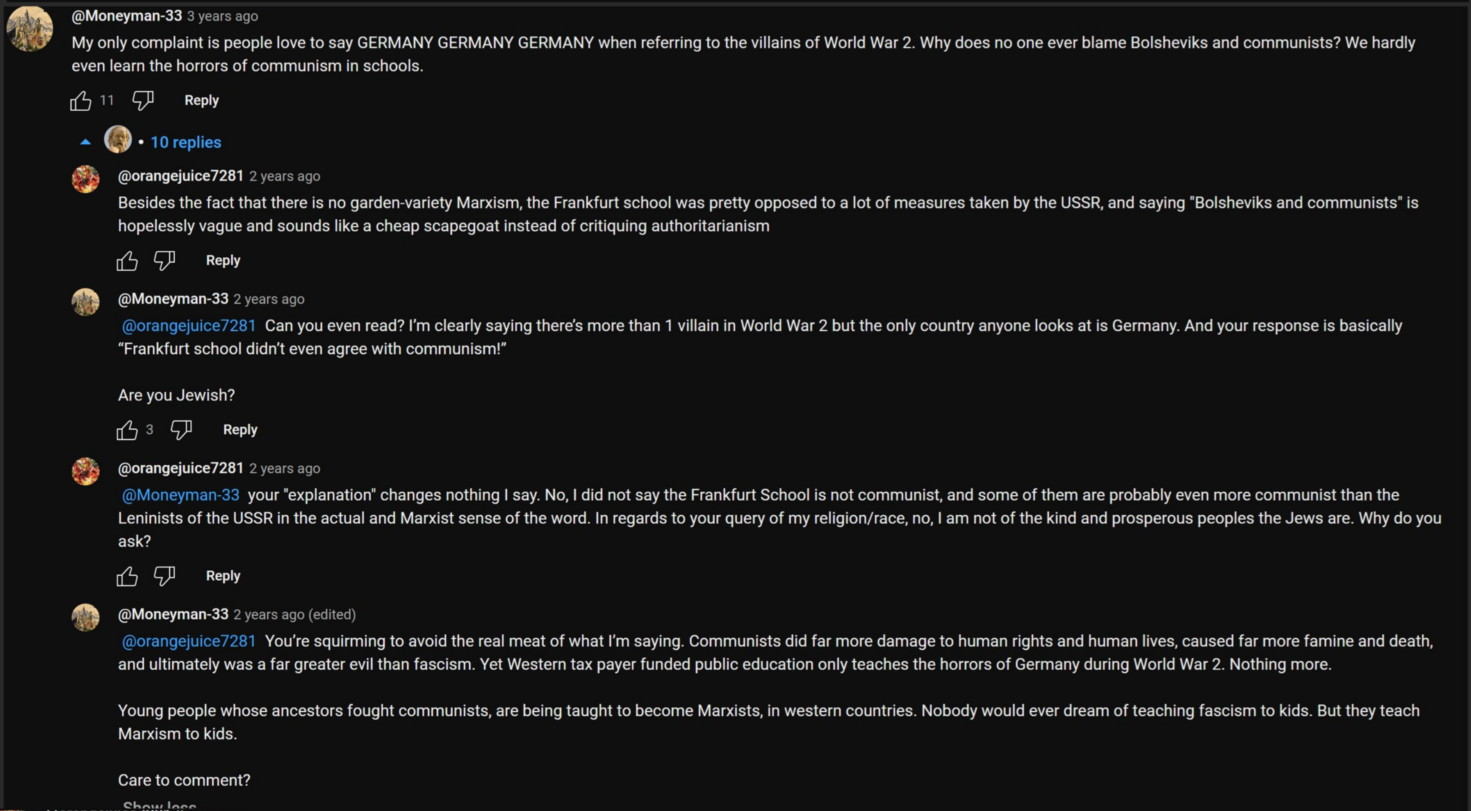


@fredwelf8650 2 years ago

This lecture is so bad that I am now critical towards his other lectures. I have to wonder what his specialization is because he is clearly ignorant of the Frankfurt School and apparently of the problems of the 20th century, tout court! Take his characterization of the Frankfurters as 'technophobic!' It is astonishing that Sugrue is so unaware of 20th century disasters that he is unable to realize what their objection to technology is all about. Consider the battle of the Somme and Verdun in 1917 - over 1 million deaths in each, not casualties, deaths! The Germans mounted the Spring Offensive in 1918 to try to win the war before the Americans could field their 2 million doughboys. So, they shifted their divisions to the Western Front, while leaving another million troops to guard Eastern Europe! This resulted in another 1 million deaths. Americans finished them off in less than 6 months. the technologies at issue: gas warfare, the machine gun, tanks and above all, artillery. The objection to technology is the efficiency of guns and ordnance. How a philosopher like Sugrue is unaware of this extraordinary problem is mind boggling - the real reason why technocrats of the 20th century have surpassed philosophers in relevance. THEN, the rise of fascism was palpable to the Frankfurt School intellectuals whose empirical studies of personality and authority began in 1930 by Horkheimer, Adorno, Fromm and Marcuse. The problem of killing efficiency took on new horrors as the sadistic Nazi's rolled over all of Europe and set up the death camps. Horkheimer and Adorno assessed the general social problem as one of mythologization built into enlightenment thinking, an historical and social analysis. Sugrue underestimates the problem of authoritarianism and fascism in the US especially since he is apparently unaware of the American Civil War and its sequelae in widespread racist practices which persist to this day. Sugure does not know why Adorno criticizes popular music, nor why the Nazi's banned jazz in Germany - because it was considered to be black music. Perhaps he gets it right that Americans are not informed about the issues, about the Positivist Dispute, about why Popper is wrong to push science without any awareness of what science and technology is producing as mindlessly conformist and obedient, reacting rhythmically to the three minute ditties, but affluent characters, while incarceration of the "criminal" underclass increases to infinity! This lecture is a travesty.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad asked, "Have considered switching to decaf?"



@Moneyman-33 3 years ago

My only complaint is people love to say GERMANY GERMANY GERMANY when referring to the villains of World War 2. Why does no one ever blame Bolsheviks and communists? We hardly even learn the horrors of communism in schools.

@orangejuice7281 2 years ago

Besides the fact that there is no garden-variety Marxism, the Frankfurt school was pretty opposed to a lot of measures taken by the USSR, and saying "Bolsheviks and communists" is hopelessly vague and sounds like a cheap scapegoat instead of critiquing authoritarianism

@Moneyman-33 2 years ago

@orangejuice7281 Can you even read? I'm clearly saying there's more than 1 villain in World War 2 but the only country anyone looks at is Germany. And your response is basically "Frankfurt school didn't even agree with communism!"

Are you Jewish?

@orangejuice7281 2 years ago

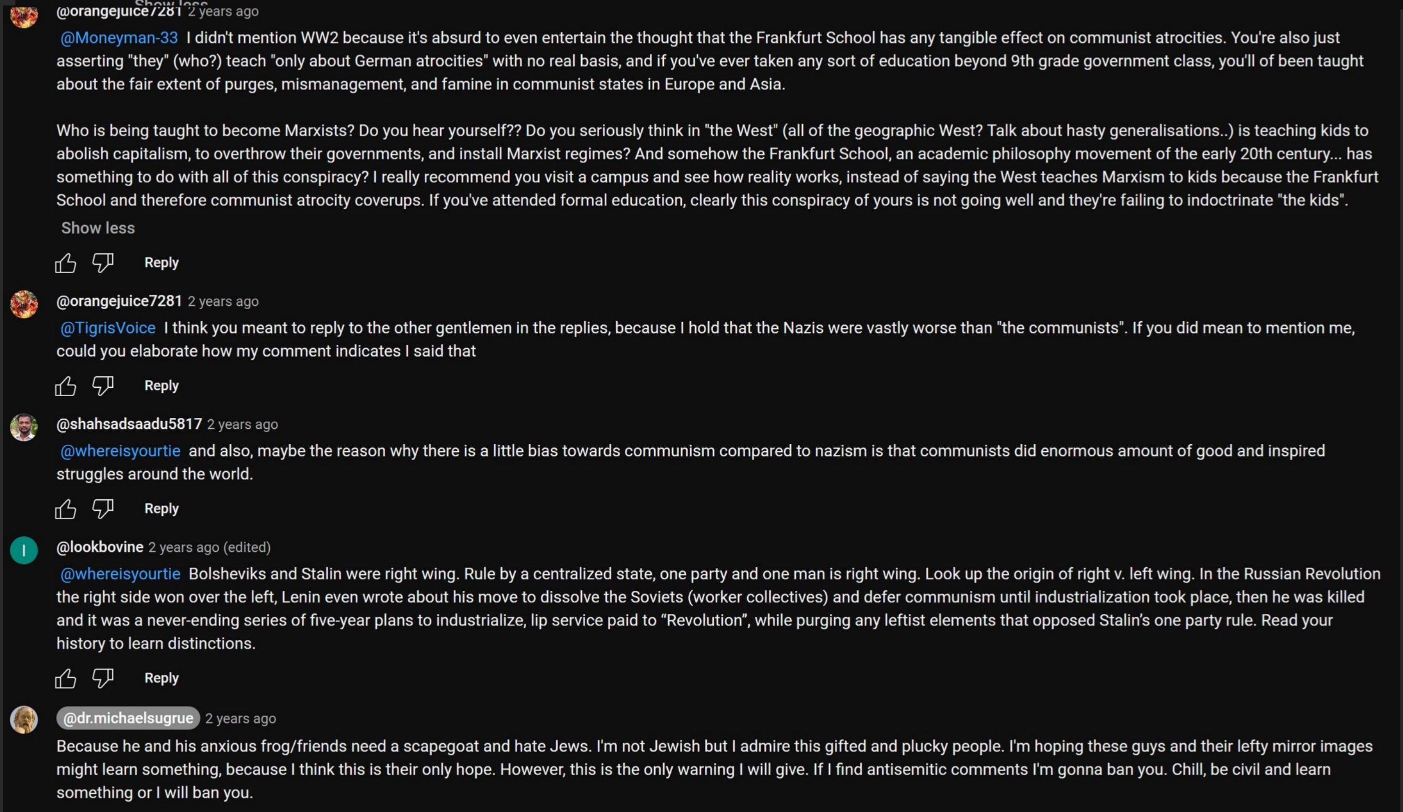
@Moneyman-33 your "explanation" changes nothing I say. No, I did not say the Frankfurt School is not communist, and some of them are probably even more communist than the Leninists of the USSR in the actual and Marxist sense of the word. In regards to your query of my religion/race, no, I am not of the kind and prosperous peoples the Jews are. Why do you ask?

@Moneyman-33 2 years ago (edited)

@orangejuice7281 You're squirming to avoid the real meat of what I'm saying. Communists did far more damage to human rights and human lives, caused far more famine and death, and ultimately was a far greater evil than fascism. Yet Western tax payer funded public education only teaches the horrors of Germany during World War 2. Nothing more.

Young people whose ancestors fought communists, are being taught to become Marxists, in western countries. Nobody would ever dream of teaching fascism to kids. But they teach Marxism to kids.

Care to comment?



@orangejuice7281 2 years ago

@Moneyman-33 I didn't mention WW2 because it's absurd to even entertain the thought that the Frankfurt School has any tangible effect on communist atrocities. You're also just asserting "they" (who?) teach "only about German atrocities" with no real basis, and if you've ever taken any sort of education beyond 9th grade government class, you'll of been taught about the fair extent of purges, mismanagement, and famine in communist states in Europe and Asia.

Who is being taught to become Marxists? Do you hear yourself?? Do you seriously think in "the West" (all of the geographic West? Talk about hasty generalisations..) is teaching kids to abolish capitalism, to overthrow their governments, and install Marxist regimes? And somehow the Frankfurt School, an academic philosophy movement of the early 20th century... has something to do with all of this conspiracy? I really recommend you visit a campus and see how reality works, instead of saying the West teaches Marxism to kids because the Frankfurt School and therefore communist atrocity coverups. If you've attended formal education, clearly this conspiracy of yours is not going well and they're failing to indoctrinate "the kids".

@orangejuice7281 2 years ago

@TigrisVoice I think you meant to reply to the other gentlemen in the replies, because I hold that the Nazis were vastly worse than "the communists". If you did mean to mention me, could you elaborate how my comment indicates I said that

@shahsadsaadu5817 2 years ago

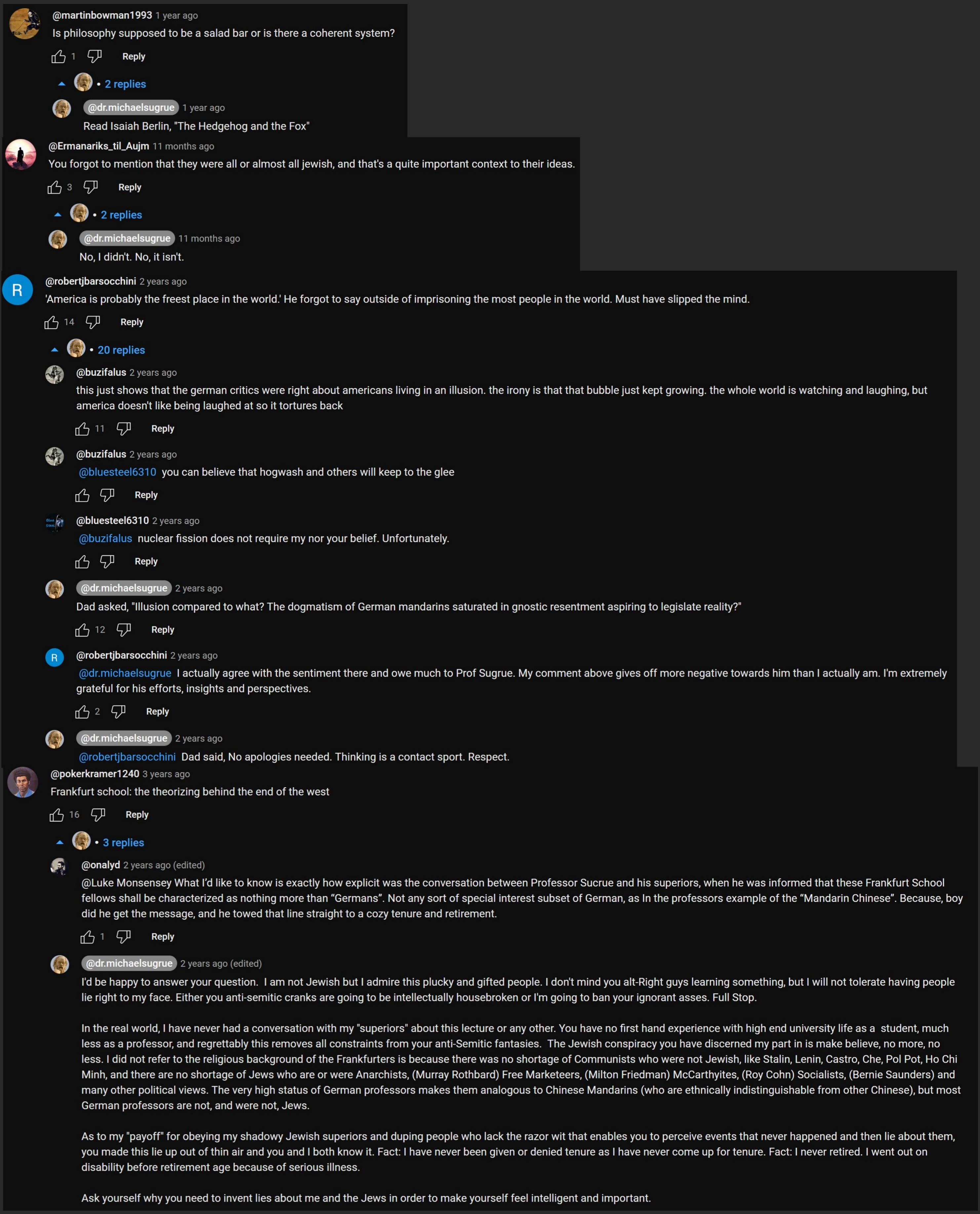
@whereisyourtie and also, maybe the reason why there is a little bias towards communism compared to nazism is that communists did enormous amount of good and inspired struggles around the world.

@lookbovine 2 years ago (edited)

@whereisyourtie Bolsheviks and Stalin were right wing. Rule by a centralized state, one party and one man is right wing. Look up the origin of right v. left wing. In the Russian Revolution the right side won over the left, Lenin even wrote about his move to dissolve the Soviets (worker collectives) and defer communism until industrialization took place, then he was killed and it was a never-ending series of five-year plans to industrialize, lip service paid to "Revolution", while purging any leftist elements that opposed Stalin's one party rule. Read your history to learn distinctions.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Because he and his anxious frog/friends need a scapegoat and hate Jews. I'm not Jewish but I admire this gifted and plucky people. I'm hoping these guys and their lefty mirror images might learn something, because I think this is their only hope. However, this is the only warning I will give. If I find antisemitic comments I'm gonna ban you. Chill, be civil and learn something or I will ban you.



@martinbowman1993 1 year ago

Is philosophy supposed to be a salad bar or is there a coherent system?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Read Isaiah Berlin, "The Hedgehog and the Fox"

@Ermanariks_til_Aujm 11 months ago

You forgot to mention that they were all or almost all jewish, and that's a quite important context to their ideas.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

No, I didn't. No, it isn't.

@robertjbarsocchini 2 years ago

'America is probably the freest place in the world.' He forgot to say outside of imprisoning the most people in the world. Must have slipped the mind.

@buzifalus 2 years ago

this just shows that the german critics were right about americans living in an illusion. the irony is that that bubble just kept growing. the whole world is watching and laughing, but america doesn't like being laughed at so it tortures back

@buzifalus 2 years ago

@bluesteel6310 you can believe that hogwash and others will keep to the glee

@bluesteel6310 2 years ago

@buzifalus nuclear fission does not require my nor your belief. Unfortunately.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad asked, "Illusion compared to what? The dogmatism of German mandarins saturated in gnostic resentment aspiring to legislate reality?"

@robertjbarsocchini 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I actually agree with the sentiment there and owe much to Prof Sugrue. My comment above gives off more negative towards him than I actually am. I'm extremely grateful for his efforts, insights and perspectives.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@robertjbarsocchini Dad said, No apologies needed. Thinking is a contact sport. Respect.

@pokerkramer1240 3 years ago

Frankfurt school: the theorizing behind the end of the west

@onalyd 2 years ago (edited)

@Luke Monsensey What I'd like to know is exactly how explicit was the conversation between Professor Sucrue and his superiors, when he was informed that these Frankfurt School fellows shall be characterized as nothing more than "Germans". Not any sort of special interest subset of German, as In the professors example of the "Mandarin Chinese". Because, boy did he get the message, and he towed that line straight to a cozy tenure and retirement.

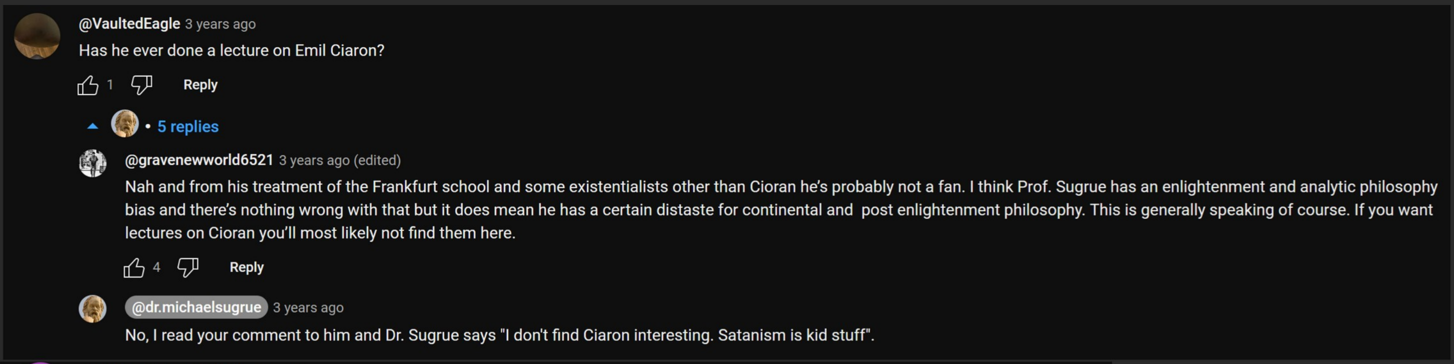
@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

I'd be happy to answer your question. I am not Jewish but I admire this plucky and gifted people. I don't mind you alt-Right guys learning something, but I will not tolerate having people lie right to my face. Either you anti-semitic cranks are going to be intellectually housebroken or I'm going to ban your ignorant asses. Full Stop.

In the real world, I have never had a conversation with my "superiors" about this lecture or any other. You have no first hand experience with high end university life as a student, much less as a professor, and regrettably this removes all constraints from your anti-Semitic fantasies. The Jewish conspiracy you have discerned my part in is make believe, no more, no less. I did not refer to the religious background of the Frankfurters is because there was no shortage of Communists who were not Jewish, like Stalin, Lenin, Castro, Che, Pol Pot, Ho Chi Minh, and there are no shortage of Jews who are or were Anarchists, (Murray Rothbard) Free Marketeers, (Milton Friedman) McCarthyites, (Roy Cohn) Socialists, (Bernie Saunders) and many other political views. The very high status of German professors makes them analogous to Chinese Mandarins (who are ethnically indistinguishable from other Chinese), but most German professors are not, and were not, Jews.

As to my "payoff" for obeying my shadowy Jewish superiors and duping people who lack the razor wit that enables you to perceive events that never happened and then lie about them, you made this lie up out of thin air and you and I both know it. Fact: I have never been given or denied tenure as I have never come up for tenure. Fact: I never retired. I went out on disability before retirement age because of serious illness.

Ask yourself why you need to invent lies about me and the Jews in order to make yourself feel intelligent and important.



@VaultedEagle 3 years ago

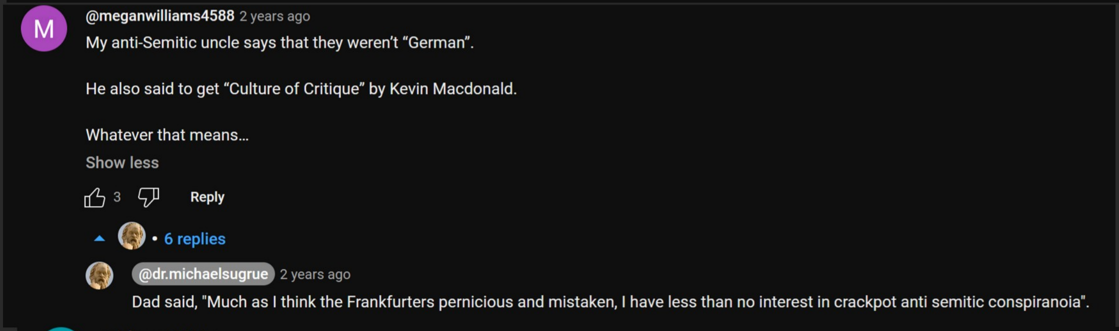
Has he ever done a lecture on Emil Ciaron?

@gravenewworld6521 3 years ago (edited)

Nah and from his treatment of the Frankfurt school and some existentialists other than Cioran he's probably not a fan. I think Prof. Sugrue has an enlightenment and analytic philosophy bias and there's nothing wrong with that but it does mean he has a certain distaste for continental and post enlightenment philosophy. This is generally speaking of course. If you want lectures on Cioran you'll most likely not find them here.

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

No, I read your comment to him and Dr. Sugrue says "I don't find Ciaron interesting. Satanism is kid stuff".



@meganwilliams4588 2 years ago

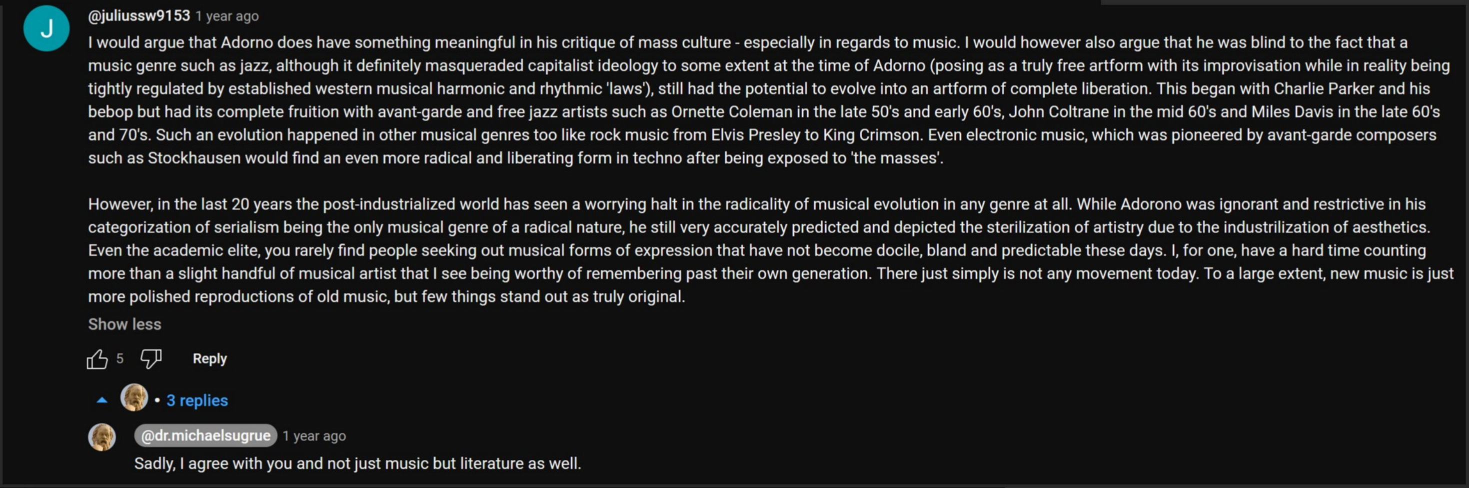
My anti-Semitic uncle says that they weren't "German".

He also said to get "Culture of Critique" by Kevin Macdonald.

Whatever that means…

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, "Much as I think the Frankfurters pernicious and mistaken, I have less than no interest in crackpot anti semitic conspiranoia".



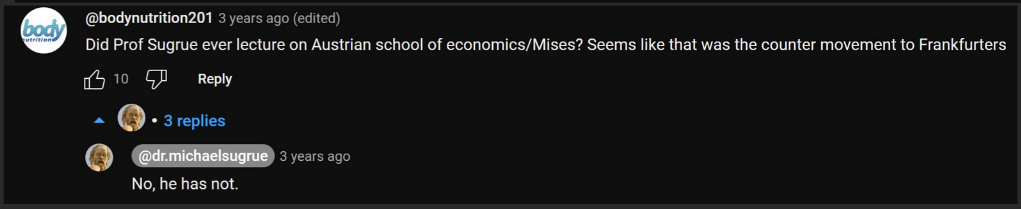
@juliussw9153 1 year ago

I would argue that Adorno does have something meaningful in his critique of mass culture - especially in regards to music. I would however also argue that he was blind to the fact that a music genre such as jazz, although it definitely masqueraded capitalist ideology to some extent at the time of Adorno (posing as a truly free artform with its improvisation while in reality being tightly regulated by established western musical harmonic and rhythmic 'laws'), still had the potential to evolve into an artform of complete liberation. This began with Charlie Parker and his bebop but had its complete fruition with avant-garde and free jazz artists such as Ornette Coleman in the late 50's and early 60's, John Coltrane in the mid 60's and Miles Davis in the late 60's and 70's. Such an evolution happened in other musical genres too like rock music from Elvis Presley to King Crimson. Even electronic music, which was pioneered by avant-garde composers such as Stockhausen would find an even more radical and liberating form in techno after being exposed to 'the masses'.

However, in the last 20 years the post-industrialized world has seen a worrying halt in the radicality of musical evolution in any genre at all. While Adorono was ignorant and restrictive in his categorization of serialism being the only musical genre of a radical nature, he still very accurately predicted and depicted the sterilization of artistry due to the industrilization of aesthetics. Even the academic elite, you rarely find people seeking out musical forms of expression that have not become docile, bland and predictable these days. I, for one, have a hard time counting more than a slight handful of musical artist that I see being worthy of remembering past their own generation. There just simply is not any movement today. To a large extent, new music is just more polished reproductions of old music, but few things stand out as truly original.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Sadly, I agree with you and not just music but literature as well.

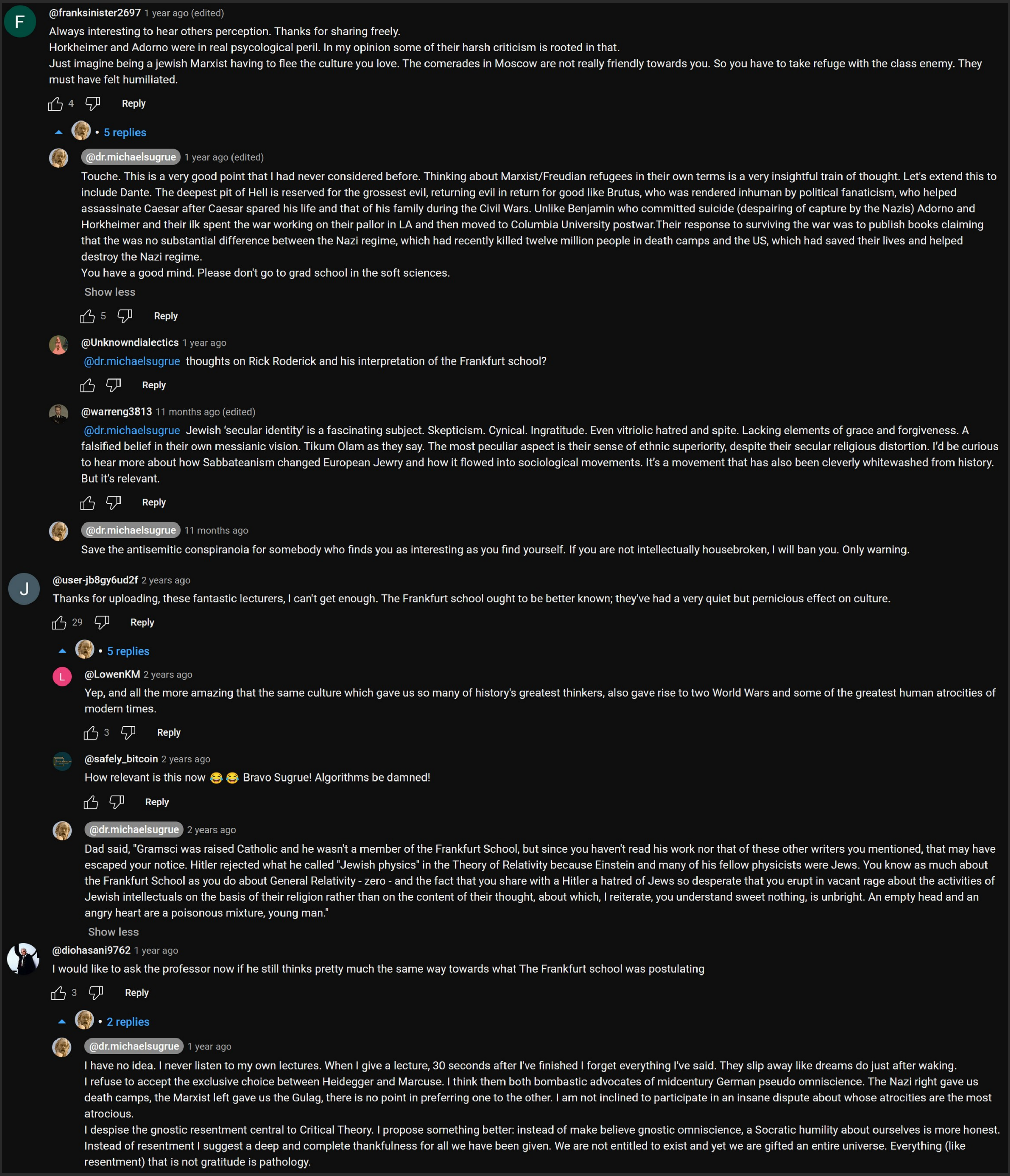


@bodynutrition201 3 years ago (edited)

Did Prof Sugrue ever lecture on Austrian school of economics/Mises? Seems like that was the counter movement to Frankfurters

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

No, he has not.



@franksinister2697 1 year ago (edited)

Always interesting to hear others perception. Thanks for sharing freely.
Horkheimer and Adorno were in real psycological peril. In my opinion some of their harsh criticism is rooted in that.
Just imagine being a jewish Marxist having to flee the culture you love. The comerades in Moscow are not really friendly towards you. So you have to take refuge with the class enemy. They must have felt humiliated.

4 Reply

5 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Touche. This is a very good point that I had never considered before. Thinking about Marxist/Freudian refugees in their own terms is a very insightful train of thought. Let's extend this to include Dante. The deepest pit of Hell is reserved for the grossest evil, returning evil in return for good like Brutus, who was rendered inhuman by political fanaticism, who helped assassinate Caesar after Caesar spared his life and that of his family during the Civil Wars. Unlike Benjamin who committed suicide (despairing of capture by the Nazis) Adorno and Horkheimer and their ilk spent the war working on their pallor in LA and then moved to Columbia University postwar.Their response to surviving the war was to publish books claiming that the was no substantial difference between the Nazi regime, which had recently killed twelve million people in death camps and the US, which had saved their lives and helped destroy the Nazi regime.
You have a good mind. Please don't go to grad school in the soft sciences.

Show less

5 Reply

@Unknowndialectics 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue thoughts on Rick Roderick and his interpretation of the Frankfurt school?

Reply

@warreng3813 11 months ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue Jewish 'secular identity' is a fascinating subject. Skepticism. Cynical. Ingratitude. Even vitriolic hatred and spite. Lacking elements of grace and forgiveness. A falsified belief in their own messianic vision. Tikum Olam as they say. The most peculiar aspect is their sense of ethnic superiority, despite their secular religious distortion. I'd be curious to hear more about how Sabbateanism changed European Jewry and how it flowed into sociological movements. It's a movement that has also been cleverly whitewashed from history. But it's relevant.

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Save the antisemitic conspiranoia for somebody who finds you as interesting as you find yourself. If you are not intellectually housebroken, I will ban you. Only warning.

@user-jb8gy6ud2f 2 years ago

Thanks for uploading, these fantastic lecturers, I can't get enough. The Frankfurt school ought to be better known; they've had a very quiet but pernicious effect on culture.

29 Reply

5 replies

@LowenKM 2 years ago

Yep, and all the more amazing that the same culture which gave us so many of history's greatest thinkers, also gave rise to two World Wars and some of the greatest human atrocities of modern times.

3 Reply

@safely_bitcoin 2 years ago

How relevant is this now 😂 😂 Bravo Sugrue! Algorithms be damned!

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, "Gramsci was raised Catholic and he wasn't a member of the Frankfurt School, but since you haven't read his work nor that of these other writers you mentioned, that may have escaped your notice. Hitler rejected what he called "Jewish physics" in the Theory of Relativity because Einstein and many of his fellow physicists were Jews. You know as much about the Frankfurt School as you do about General Relativity - zero - and the fact that you share with a Hitler a hatred of Jews so desperate that you erupt in vacant rage about the activities of Jewish intellectuals on the basis of their religion rather than on the content of their thought, about which, I reiterate, you understand sweet nothing, is unbright. An empty head and an angry heart are a poisonous mixture, young man."

Show less

@diohasani9762 1 year ago

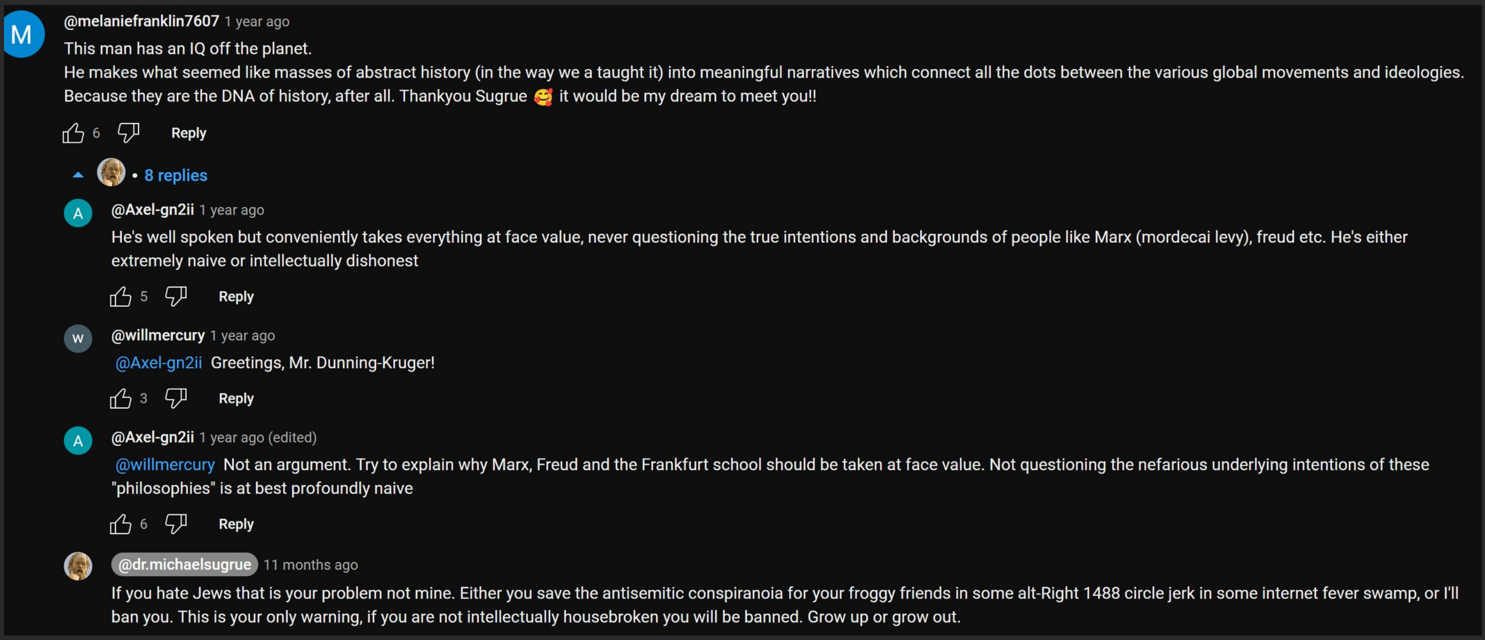
I would like to ask the professor now if he still thinks pretty much the same way towards what The Frankfurt school was postulating

3 Reply

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have no idea. I never listen to my own lectures. When I give a lecture, 30 seconds after I've finished I forget everything I've said. They slip away like dreams do just after waking.
I refuse to accept the exclusive choice between Heidegger and Marcuse. I think them both bombastic advocates of midcentury German pseudo omniscience. The Nazi right gave us death camps, the Marxist left gave us the Gulag, there is no point in preferring one to the other. I am not inclined to participate in an insane dispute about whose atrocities are the most atrocious.
I despise the gnostic resentment central to Critical Theory. I propose something better: instead of make believe gnostic omniscience, a Socratic humility about ourselves is more honest. Instead of resentment I suggest a deep and complete thankfulness for all we have been given. We are not entitled to exist and yet we are gifted an entire universe. Everything (like resentment) that is not gratitude is pathology.



@melaniefranklin7607 1 year ago

This man has an IQ off the planet.
He makes what seemed like masses of abstract history (in the way we a taught it) into meaningful narratives which connect all the dots between the various global movements and ideologies. Because they are the DNA of history, after all. Thankyou Sugrue 🥰 it would be my dream to meet you!!

@Axel-gn2ii 1 year ago

He's well spoken but conveniently takes everything at face value, never questioning the true intentions and backgrounds of people like Marx (mordecai levy), freud etc. He's either extremely naive or intellectually dishonest

@willmercury 1 year ago

@Axel-gn2ii Greetings, Mr. Dunning-Kruger!

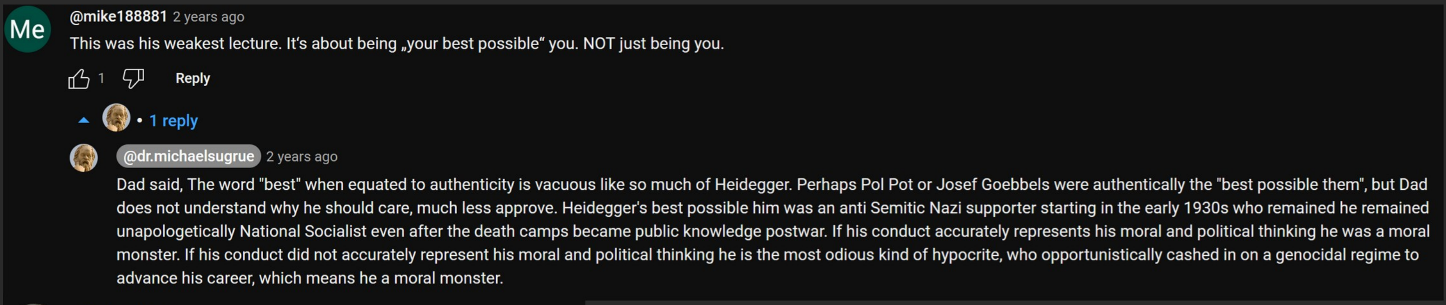
@Axel-gn2ii 1 year ago (edited)

@willmercury Not an argument. Try to explain why Marx, Freud and the Frankfurt school should be taken at face value. Not questioning the nefarious underlying intentions of these "philosophies" is at best profoundly naive

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

If you hate Jews that is your problem not mine. Either you save the antisemitic conspiranoia for your froggy friends in some alt-Right 1488 circle jerk in some internet fever swamp, or I'll ban you. This is your only warning, if you are not intellectually housebroken you will be banned. Grow up or grow out.

Heidegger: Being and Time

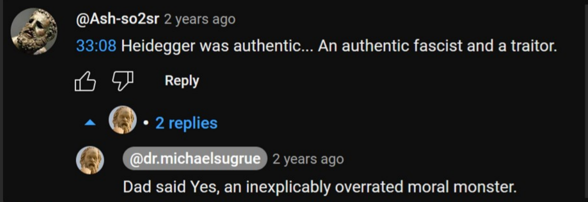


@mike188881 2 years ago

This was his weakest lecture. It's about being „your best possible" you. NOT just being you.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, The word "best" when equated to authenticity is vacuous like so much of Heidegger. Perhaps Pol Pot or Josef Goebbels were authentically the "best possible them", but Dad does not understand why he should care, much less approve. Heidegger's best possible him was an anti Semitic Nazi supporter starting in the early 1930s who remained he remained unapologetically National Socialist even after the death camps became public knowledge postwar. If his conduct accurately represents his moral and political thinking he was a moral monster. If his conduct did not accurately represent his moral and political thinking he is the most odious kind of hypocrite, who opportunistically cashed in on a genocidal regime to advance his career, which means he a moral monster.

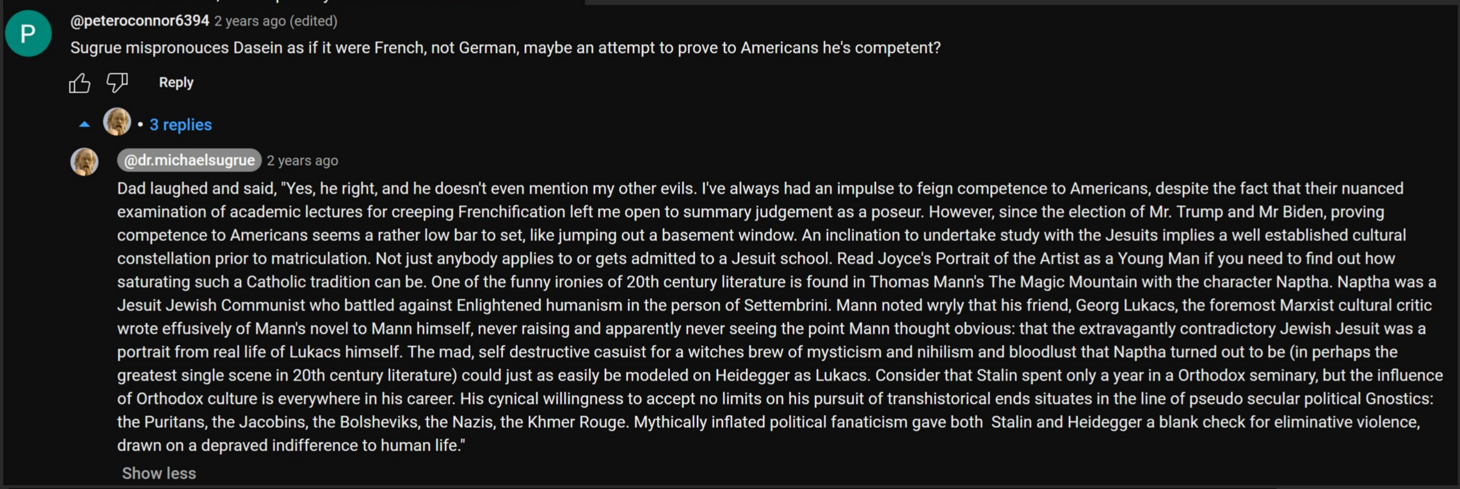


@Ash-so2sr 2 years ago

33:08 Heidegger was authentic... An authentic fascist and a traitor.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said Yes, an inexplicably overrated moral monster.

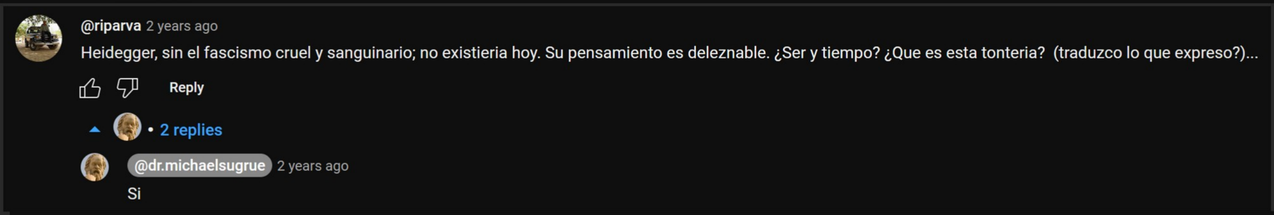


@peteroconnor6394 2 years ago (edited)

Sugrue mispronouces Dasein as if it were French, not German, maybe an attempt to prove to Americans he's competent?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed and said, "Yes, he right, and he doesn't even mention my other evils. I've always had an impulse to feign competence to Americans, despite the fact that their nuanced examination of academic lectures for creeping Frenchification left me open to summary judgement as a poseur. However, since the election of Mr. Trump and Mr Biden, proving competence to Americans seems a rather low bar to set, like jumping out a basement window. An inclination to undertake study with the Jesuits implies a well established cultural constellation prior to matriculation. Not just anybody applies to or gets admitted to a Jesuit school. Read Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man if you need to find out how saturating such a Catholic tradition can be. One of the funny ironies of 20th century literature is found in Thomas Mann's The Magic Mountain with the character Naptha. Naptha was a Jesuit Jewish Communist who battled against Enlightened humanism in the person of Settembrini. Mann noted wryly that his friend, Georg Lukacs, the foremost Marxist cultural critic wrote effusively of Mann's novel to Mann himself, never raising and apparently never seeing the point Mann thought obvious: that the extravagantly contradictory Jewish Jesuit was a portrait from real life of Lukacs himself. The mad, self destructive casuist for a witches brew of mysticism and nihilism and bloodlust that Naptha turned out to be (in perhaps the greatest single scene in 20th century literature) could just as easily be modeled on Heidegger as Lukacs. Consider that Stalin spent only a year in a Orthodox seminary, but the influence of Orthodox culture is everywhere in his career. His cynical willingness to accept no limits on his pursuit of transhistorical ends situates in the line of pseudo secular political Gnostics: the Puritans, the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks, the Nazis, the Khmer Rouge. Mythically inflated political fanaticism gave both Stalin and Heidegger a blank check for eliminative violence, drawn on a depraved indifference to human life."

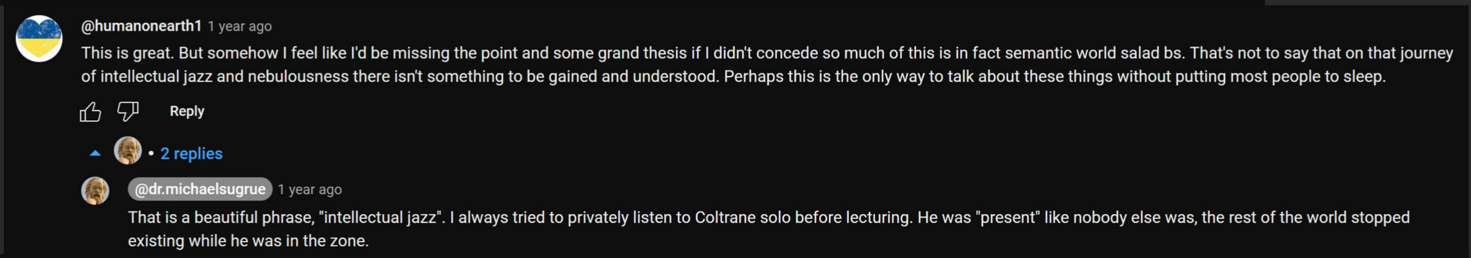


@riparva 2 years ago

Heidegger, sin el fascismo cruel y sanguinario; no existieria hoy. Su pensamiento es deleznable. ¿Ser y tiempo? ¿Que es esta tonteria? (traduzco lo que expreso?)...

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Si

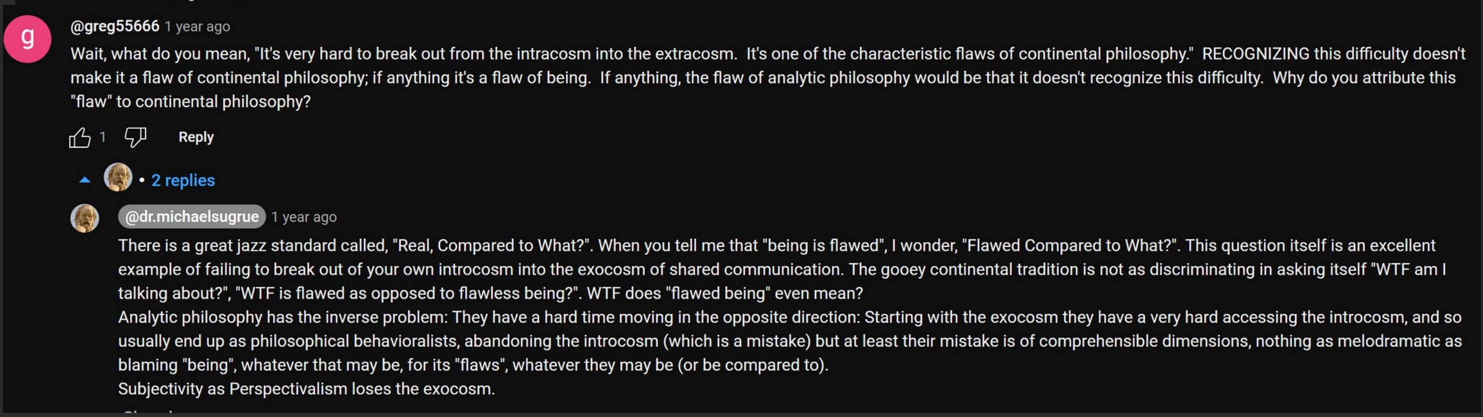


@humanonearth1 1 year ago

This is great. But somehow I feel like I'd be missing the point and some grand thesis if I didn't concede so much of this is in fact semantic world salad bs. That's not to say that on that journey of intellectual jazz and nebulousness there isn't something to be gained and understood. Perhaps this is the only way to talk about these things without putting most people to sleep.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

That is a beautiful phrase, "intellectual jazz". I always tried to privately listen to Coltrane solo before lecturing. He was "present" like nobody else was, the rest of the world stopped existing while he was in the zone.



@greg55666 1 year ago

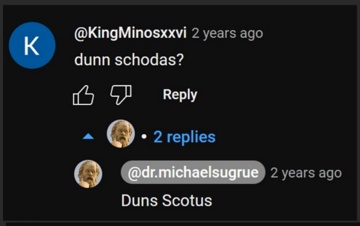
Wait, what do you mean, "It's very hard to break out from the intracosm into the extracosm. It's one of the characteristic flaws of continental philosophy." RECOGNIZING this difficulty doesn't make it a flaw of continental philosophy; if anything it's a flaw of being. If anything, the flaw of analytic philosophy would be that it doesn't recognize this difficulty. Why do you attribute this "flaw" to continental philosophy?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

There is a great jazz standard called, "Real, Compared to What?". When you tell me that "being is flawed", I wonder, "Flawed Compared to What?". This question itself is an excellent example of failing to break out of your own introcosm into the exocosm of shared communication. The gooey continental tradition is not as discriminating in asking itself "WTF am I talking about?", "WTF is flawed as opposed to flawless being?". WTF does "flawed being" even mean?

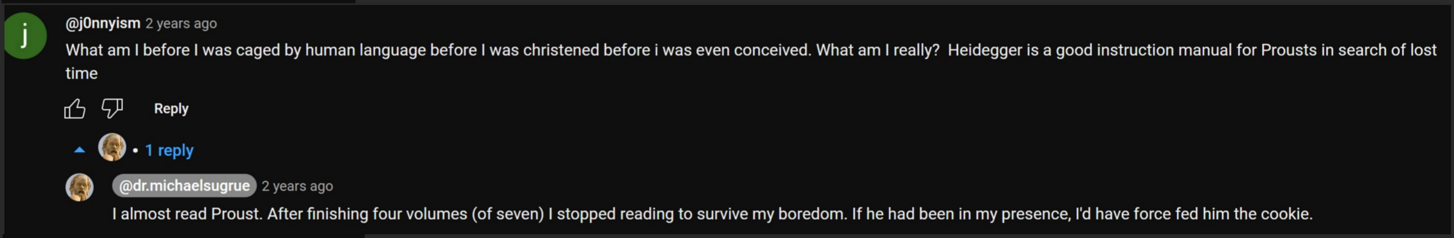
Analytic philosophy has the inverse problem: They have a hard time moving in the opposite direction: Starting with the exocosm they have a very hard accessing the introcosm, and so usually end up as philosophical behavioralists, abandoning the introcosm (which is a mistake) but at least their mistake is of comprehensible dimensions, nothing as melodramatic as blaming "being", whatever that may be, for its "flaws", whatever they may be (or be compared to).

Subjectivity as Perspectivalism loses the exocosm.



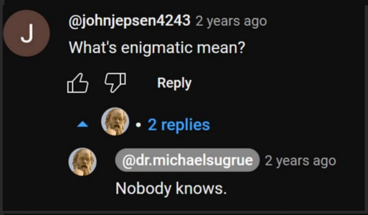
@KingMinosxxvi 2 years ago
dunn schodas?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Duns Scotus



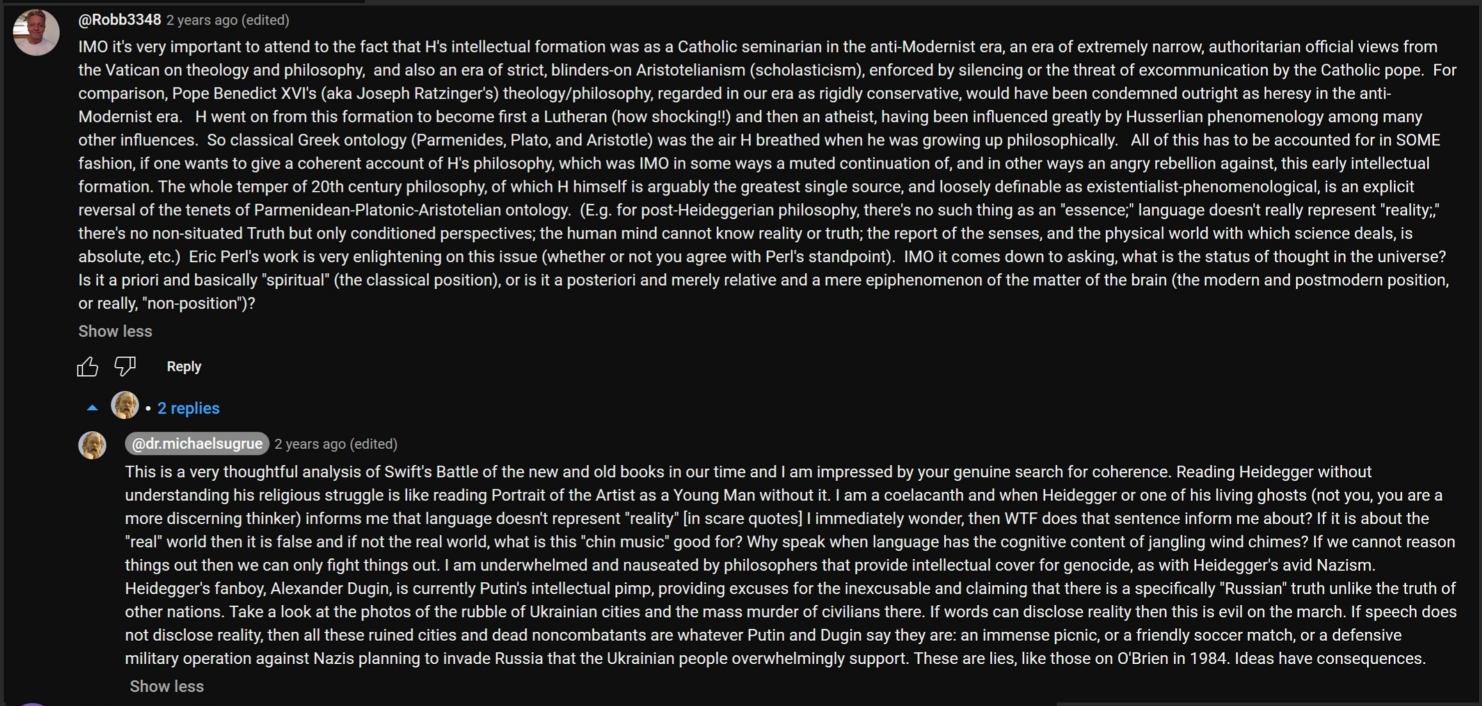
@j0nnyism 2 years ago
What am I before I was caged by human language before I was christened before i was even conceived. What am I really? Heidegger is a good instruction manual for Prousts in search of lost time

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
I almost read Proust. After finishing four volumes (of seven) I stopped reading to survive my boredom. If he had been in my presence, I'd have force fed him the cookie.



@johnjepsen4243 2 years ago
What's enigmatic mean?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Nobody knows.



@Robb3348 2 years ago (edited)
IMO it's very important to attend to the fact that H's intellectual formation was as a Catholic seminarian in the anti-Modernist era, an era of extremely narrow, authoritarian official views from the Vatican on theology and philosophy, and also an era of strict, blinders-on Aristotelianism (scholasticism), enforced by silencing or the threat of excommunication by the Catholic pope. For comparison, Pope Benedict XVI's (aka Joseph Ratzinger's) theology/philosophy, regarded in our era as rigidly conservative, would have been condemned outright as heresy in the anti-Modernist era. H went on from this formation to become first a Lutheran (how shocking!!) and then an atheist, having been influenced greatly by Husserlian phenomenology among many other influences. So classical Greek ontology (Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle) was the air H breathed when he was growing up philosophically. All of this has to be accounted for in SOME fashion, if one wants to give a coherent account of H's philosophy, which was IMO in some ways a muted continuation of, and in other ways an angry rebellion against, this early intellectual formation. The whole temper of 20th century philosophy, of which H himself is arguably the greatest single source, and loosely definable as existentialist-phenomenological, is an explicit reversal of the tenets of Parmenidean-Platonic-Aristotelian ontology. (E.g. for post-Heideggerian philosophy, there's no such thing as an "essence;" language doesn't really represent "reality;," there's no non-situated Truth but only conditioned perspectives; the human mind cannot know reality or truth; the report of the senses, and the physical world with which science deals, is absolute, etc.) Eric Perl's work is very enlightening on this issue (whether or not you agree with Perl's standpoint). IMO it comes down to asking, what is the status of thought in the universe? Is it a priori and basically "spiritual" (the classical position), or is it a posteriori and merely relative and a mere epiphenomenon of the matter of the brain (the modern and postmodern position, or really, "non-position")?
Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)
This is a very thoughtful analysis of Swift's Battle of the new and old books in our time and I am impressed by your genuine search for coherence. Reading Heidegger without understanding his religious struggle is like reading Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man without it. I am a coelacanth and when Heidegger or one of his living ghosts (not you, you are a more discerning thinker) informs me that language doesn't represent "reality" [in scare quotes] I immediately wonder, then WTF does that sentence inform me about? If it is about the "real" world then it is false and if not the real world, what is this "chin music" good for? Why speak when language has the cognitive content of jangling wind chimes? If we cannot reason things out then we can only fight things out. I am underwhelmed and nauseated by philosophers that provide intellectual cover for genocide, as with Heidegger's avid Nazism. Heidegger's fanboy, Alexander Dugin, is currently Putin's intellectual pimp, providing excuses for the inexcusable and claiming that there is a specifically "Russian" truth unlike the truth of other nations. Take a look at the photos of the rubble of Ukrainian cities and the mass murder of civilians there. If words can disclose reality then this is evil on the march. If speech does not disclose reality, then all these ruined cities and dead noncombatants are whatever Putin and Dugin say they are: an immense picnic, or a friendly soccer match, or a defensive military operation against Nazis planning to invade Russia that the Ukrainian people overwhelmingly support. These are lies, like those on O'Brien in 1984. Ideas have consequences.
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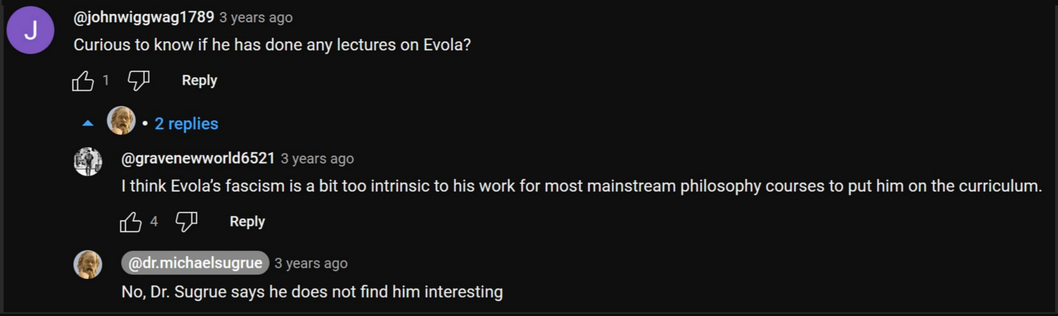
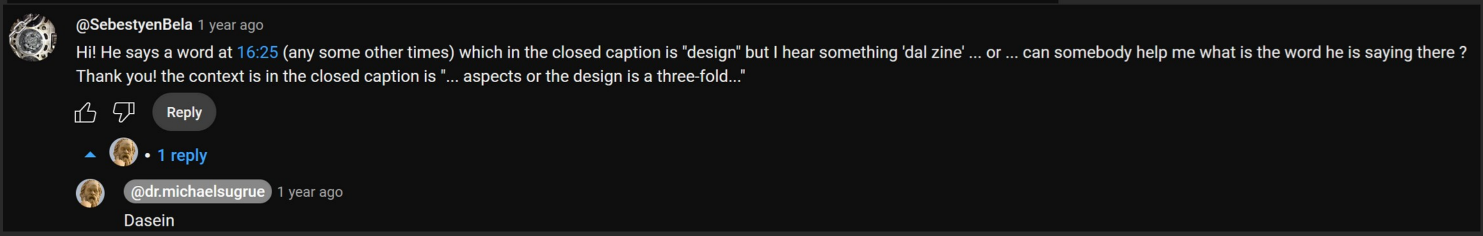


@johnwiggwag1789 3 years ago
Curious to know if he has done any lectures on Evola?

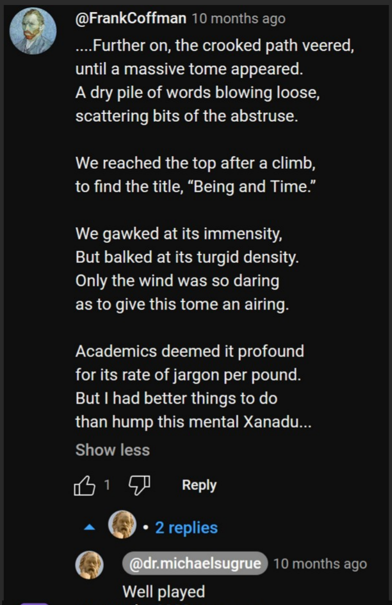
@gravenewworld6521 3 years ago
I think Evola's fascism is a bit too intrinsic to his work for most mainstream philosophy courses to put him on the curriculum.

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago
No, Dr. Sugrue says he does not find him interesting



@SebestyenBela 1 year ago
Hi! He says a word at 16:25 (any some other times) which in the closed caption is "design" but I hear something 'dal zine' ... or ... can somebody help me what is the word he is saying there ? Thank you! the context is in the closed caption is "... aspects or the design is a three-fold..."

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Dasein



@FrankCoffman 10 months ago

....Further on, the crooked path veered,
until a massive tome appeared.
A dry pile of words blowing loose,
scattering bits of the abstruse.

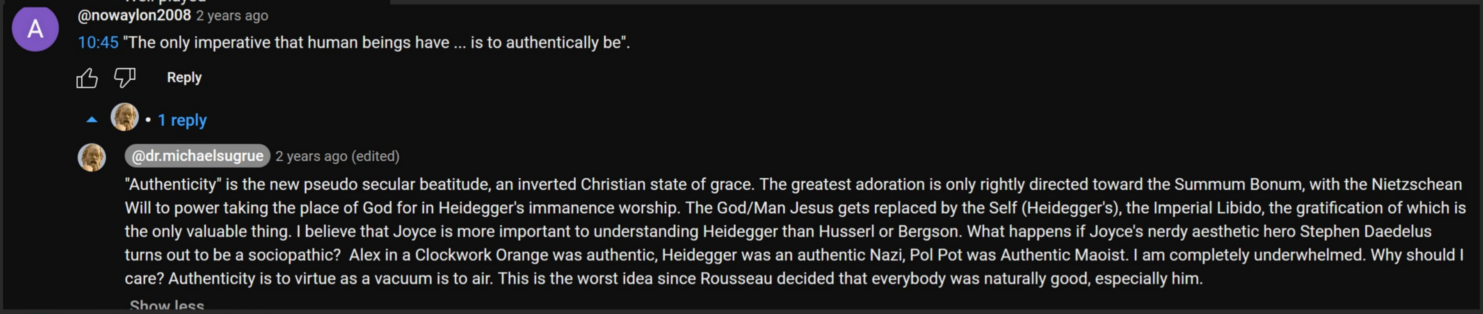
We reached the top after a climb,
to find the title, “Being and Time.”

We gawked at its immensity,
But balked at its turgid density.
Only the wind was so daring
as to give this tome an airing.

Academics deemed it profound
for its rate of jargon per pound.
But I had better things to do
than hump this mental Xanadu...

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Well played

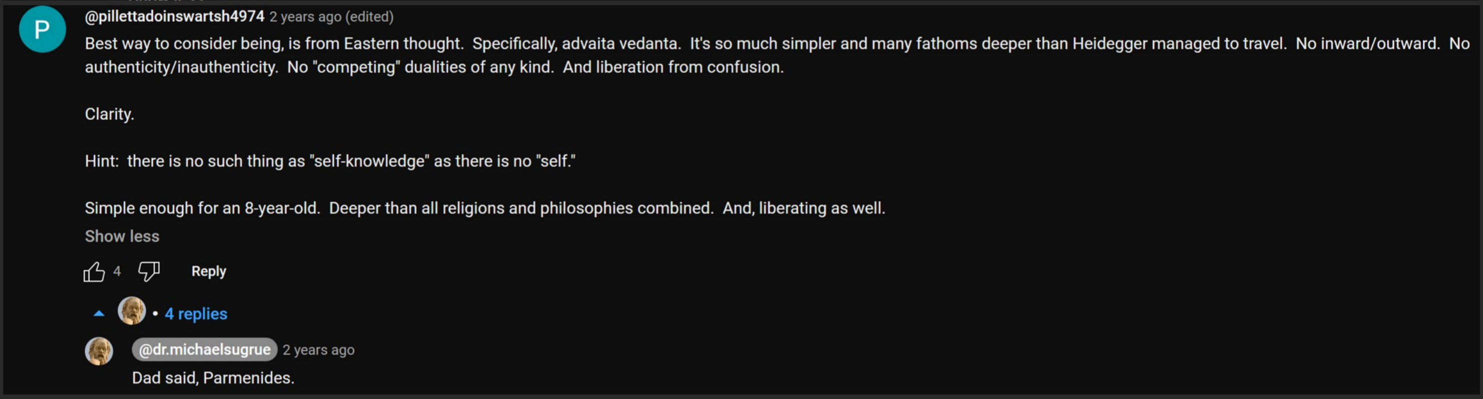


@nowaylon2008 2 years ago

10:45 "The only imperative that human beings have ... is to authentically be".

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

"Authenticity" is the new pseudo secular beatitude, an inverted Christian state of grace. The greatest adoration is only rightly directed toward the Summum Bonum, with the Nietzschean Will to power taking the place of God for in Heidegger's immanence worship. The God/Man Jesus gets replaced by the Self (Heidegger's), the Imperial Libido, the gratification of which is the only valuable thing. I believe that Joyce is more important to understanding Heidegger than Husserl or Bergson. What happens if Joyce's nerdy aesthetic hero Stephen Daedelus turns out to be a sociopathic? Alex in a Clockwork Orange was authentic, Heidegger was an authentic Nazi, Pol Pot was Authentic Maoist. I am completely underwhelmed. Why should I care? Authenticity is to virtue as a vacuum is to air. This is the worst idea since Rousseau decided that everybody was naturally good, especially him.



@pillettadoinswartsh4974 2 years ago (edited)

Best way to consider being, is from Eastern thought. Specifically, advaita vedanta. It's so much simpler and many fathoms deeper than Heidegger managed to travel. No inward/outward. No authenticity/inauthenticity. No "competing" dualities of any kind. And liberation from confusion.

Clarity.

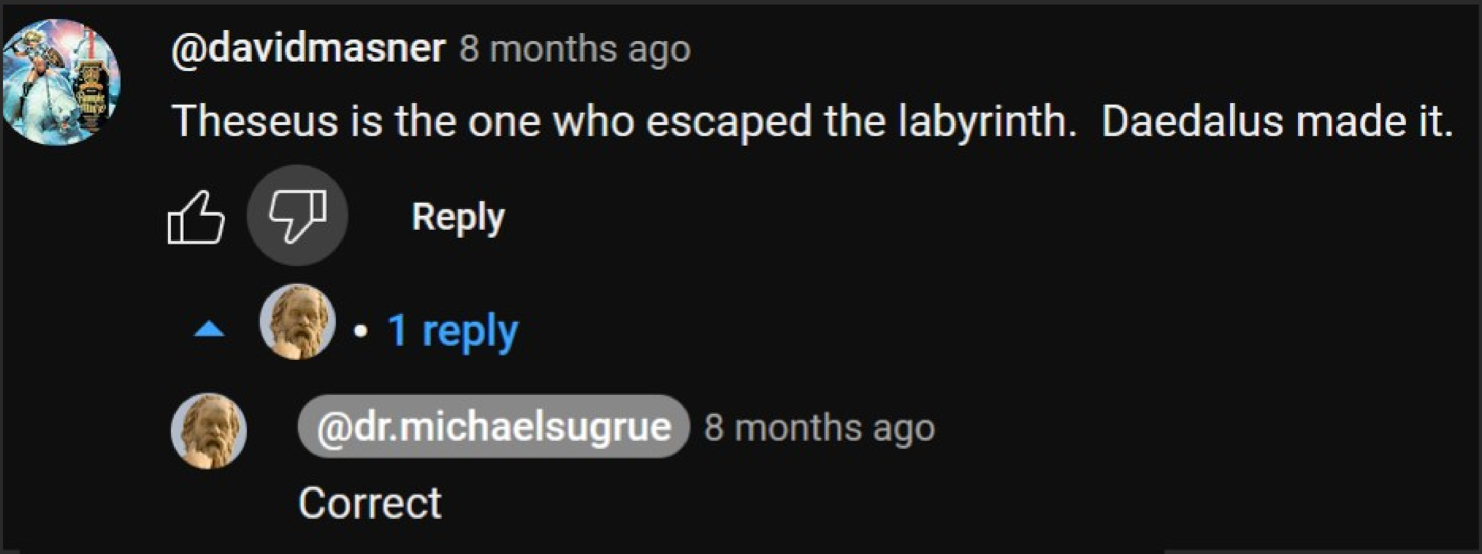
Hint: there is no such thing as "self-knowledge" as there is no "self."

Simple enough for an 8-year-old. Deeper than all religions and philosophies combined. And, liberating as well.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Parmenides.

Barthes, Semiotics and the Revolt Against Structuralism

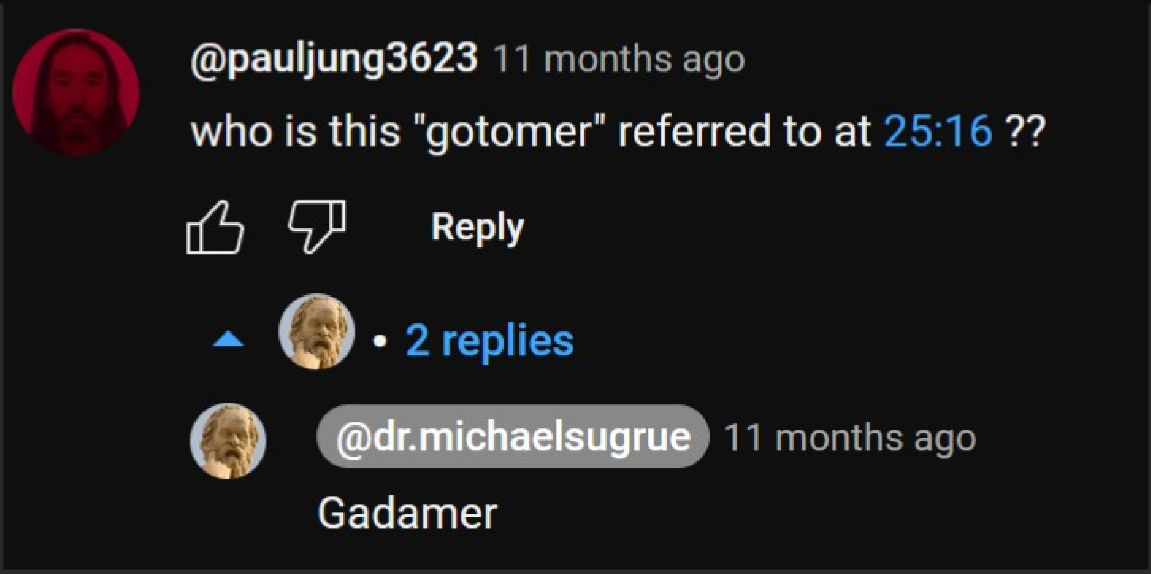


@davidmasner 8 months ago

Theseus is the one who escaped the labyrinth. Daedalus made it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Correct



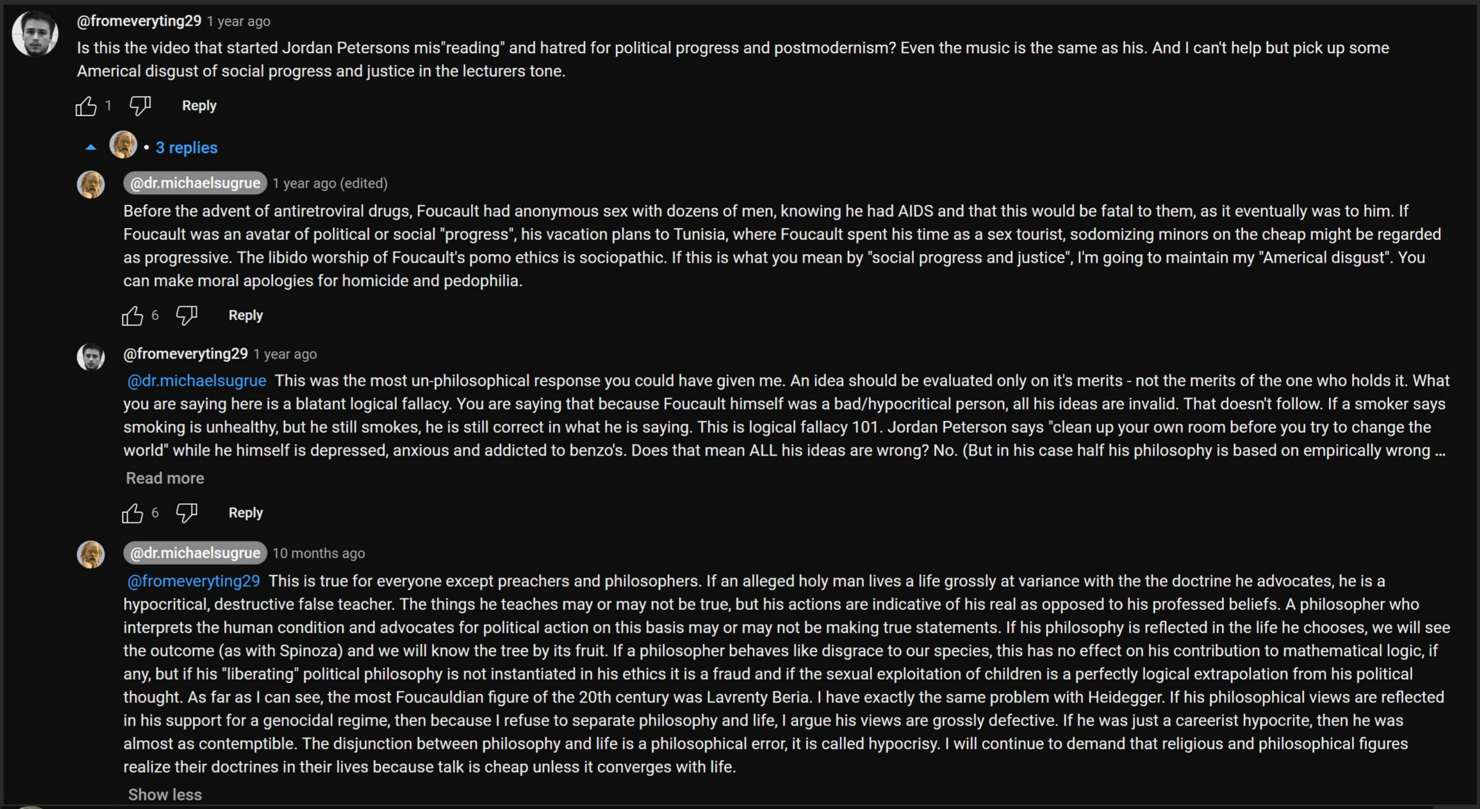
@pauljung3623 11 months ago

who is this "gotomer" referred to at 25:16 ??

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Gadamer

Foucault: Power, Knowledge and Post-structuralism



@fromeveryting29 1 year ago

Is this the video that started Jordan Petersons mis"reading" and hatred for political progress and postmodernism? Even the music is the same as his. And I can't help but pick up some Americal disgust of social progress and justice in the lecturers tone.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Before the advent of antiretroviral drugs, Foucault had anonymous sex with dozens of men, knowing he had AIDS and that this would be fatal to them, as it eventually was to him. If Foucault was an avatar of political or social "progress", his vacation plans to Tunisia, where Foucault spent his time as a sex tourist, sodomizing minors on the cheap might be regarded as progressive. The libido worship of Foucault's pomo ethics is sociopathic. If this is what you mean by "social progress and justice", I'm going to maintain my "Americal disgust". You can make moral apologies for homicide and pedophilia.

@fromeveryting29 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue This was the most un-philosophical response you could have given me. An idea should be evaluated only on it's merits - not the merits of the one who holds it. What you are saying here is a blatant logical fallacy. You are saying that because Foucault himself was a bad/hypocritical person, all his ideas are invalid. That doesn't follow. If a smoker says smoking is unhealthy, but he still smokes, he is still correct in what he is saying. This is logical fallacy 101. Jordan Peterson says "clean up your own room before you try to change the world" while he himself is depressed, anxious and addicted to benzo's. Does that mean ALL his ideas are wrong? No. (But in his case half his philosophy is based on empirically wrong ...

Read more

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

@fromeveryting29 This is true for everyone except preachers and philosophers. If an alleged holy man lives a life grossly at variance with the the doctrine he advocates, he is a hypocritical, destructive false teacher. The things he teaches may or may not be true, but his actions are indicative of his real as opposed to his professed beliefs. A philosopher who interprets the human condition and advocates for political action on this basis may or may not be making true statements. If his philosophy is reflected in the life he chooses, we will see the outcome (as with Spinoza) and we will know the tree by its fruit. If a philosopher behaves like disgrace to our species, this has no effect on his contribution to mathematical logic, if any, but if his "liberating" political philosophy is not instantiated in his ethics it is a fraud and if the sexual exploitation of children is a perfectly logical extrapolation from his political thought. As far as I can see, the most Foucauldian figure of the 20th century was Lavrenty Beria. I have exactly the same problem with Heidegger. If his philosophical views are reflected in his support for a genocidal regime, then because I refuse to separate philosophy and life, I argue his views are grossly defective. If he was just a careerist hypocrite, then he was almost as contemptible. The disjunction between philosophy and life is a philosophical error, it is called hypocrisy. I will continue to demand that religious and philosophical figures realize their doctrines in their lives because talk is cheap unless it converges with life.

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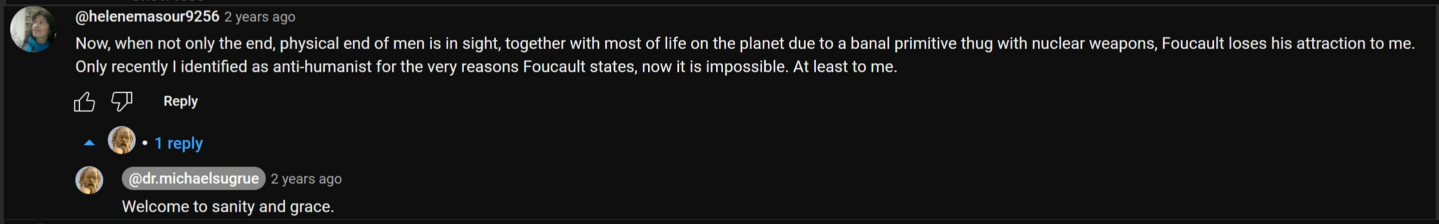
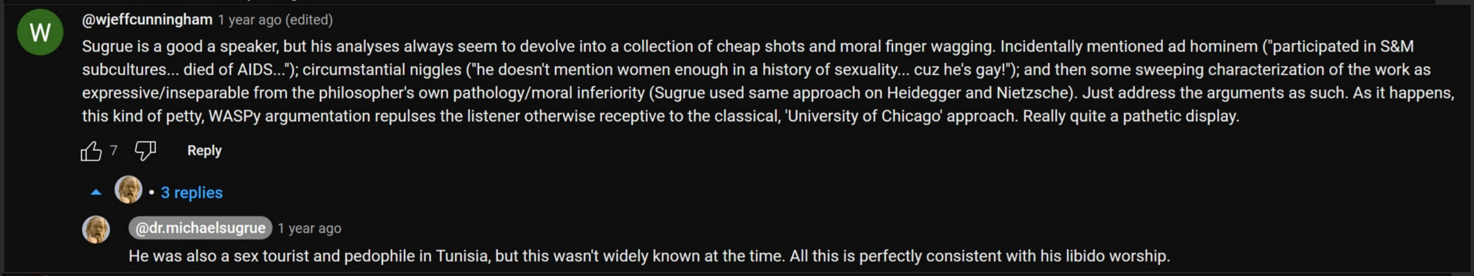


@helenemasour9256 2 years ago

Now, when not only the end, physical end of men is in sight, together with most of life on the planet due to a banal primitive thug with nuclear weapons, Foucault loses his attraction to me. Only recently I identified as anti-humanist for the very reasons Foucault states, now it is impossible. At least to me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Welcome to sanity and grace.

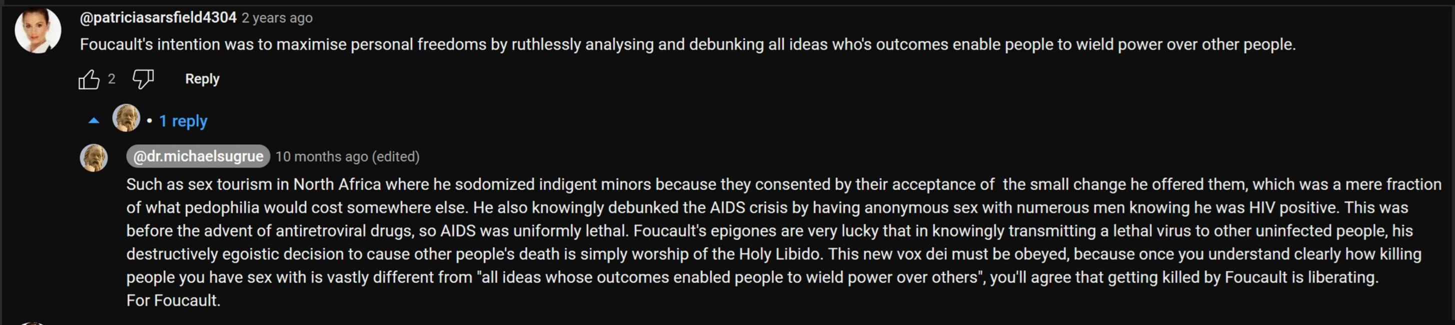


@wjeffcunningham 1 year ago (edited)

Sugrue is a good a speaker, but his analyses always seem to devolve into a collection of cheap shots and moral finger wagging. Incidentally mentioned ad hominem ("participated in S&M subcultures... died of AIDS..."); circumstantial niggles ("he doesn't mention women enough in a history of sexuality... cuz he's gay!"); and then some sweeping characterization of the work as expressive/inseparable from the philosopher's own pathology/moral inferiority (Sugrue used same approach on Heidegger and Nietzsche). Just address the arguments as such. As it happens, this kind of petty, WASPy argumentation repulses the listener otherwise receptive to the classical, 'University of Chicago' approach. Really quite a pathetic display.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

He was also a sex tourist and pedophile in Tunisia, but this wasn't widely known at the time. All this is perfectly consistent with his libido worship.

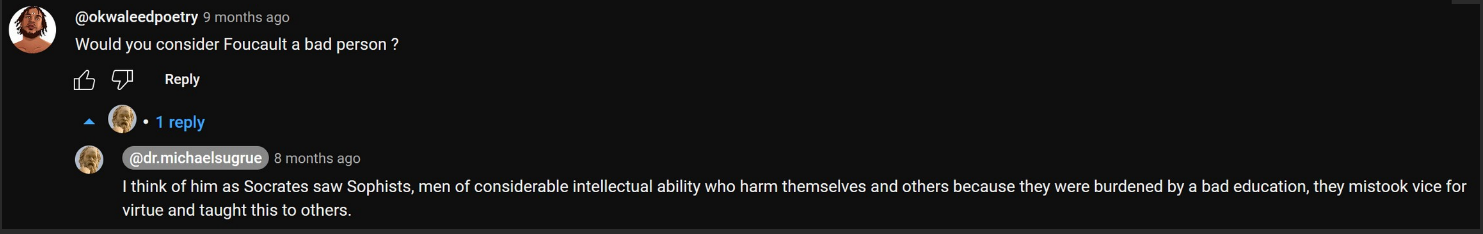


@patriciasarsfield4304 2 years ago

Foucault's intention was to maximise personal freedoms by ruthlessly analysing and debunking all ideas who's outcomes enable people to wield power over other people.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Such as sex tourism in North Africa where he sodomized indigent minors because they consented by their acceptance of the small change he offered them, which was a mere fraction of what pedophilia would cost somewhere else. He also knowingly debunked the AIDS crisis by having anonymous sex with numerous men knowing he was HIV positive. This was before the advent of antiretroviral drugs, so AIDS was uniformly lethal. Foucault's epigones are very lucky that in knowingly transmitting a lethal virus to other uninfected people, his destructively egoistic decision to cause other people's death is simply worship of the Holy Libido. This new vox dei must be obeyed, because once you understand clearly how killing people you have sex with is vastly different from "all ideas whose outcomes enabled people to wield power over others", you'll agree that getting killed by Foucault is liberating.
For Foucault.

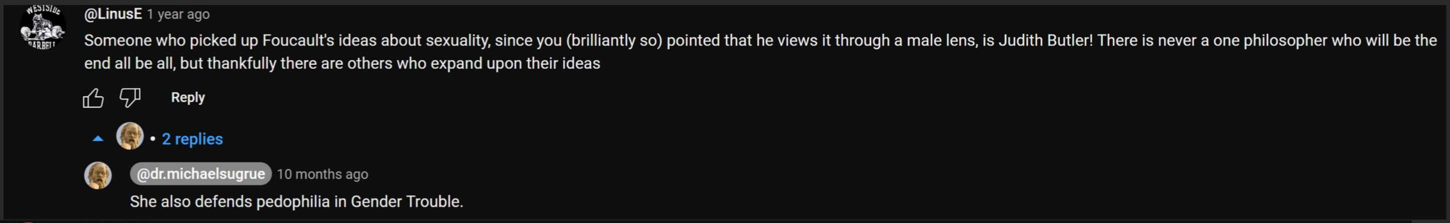


@okwaleedpoetry 9 months ago

Would you consider Foucault a bad person ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I think of him as Socrates saw Sophists, men of considerable intellectual ability who harm themselves and others because they were burdened by a bad education, they mistook vice for virtue and taught this to others.

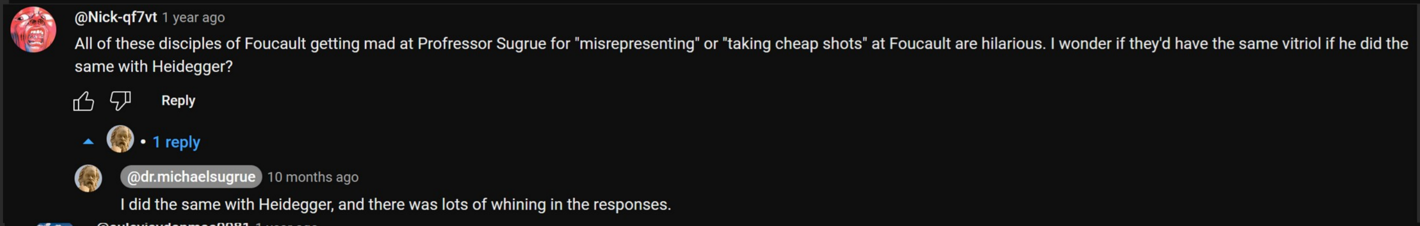


@LinusE 1 year ago

Someone who picked up Foucault's ideas about sexuality, since you (brilliantly so) pointed that he views it through a male lens, is Judith Butler! There is never a one philosopher who will be the end all be all, but thankfully there are others who expand upon their ideas

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

She also defends pedophilia in Gender Trouble.

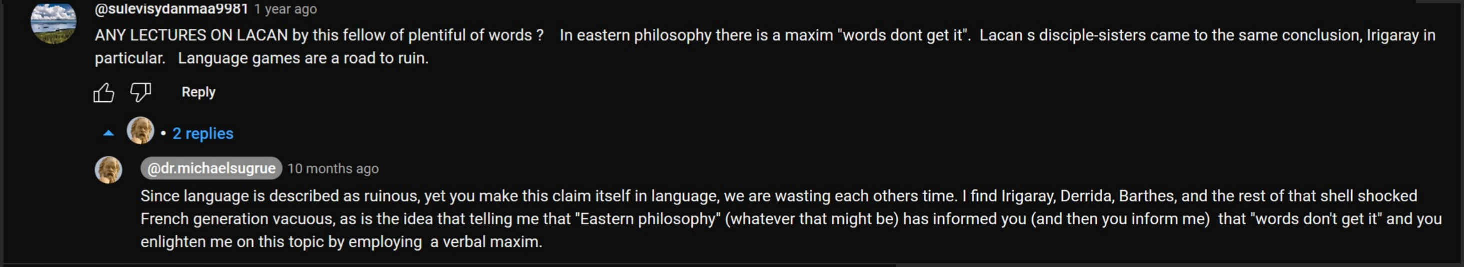


@Nick-qf7vt 1 year ago

All of these disciples of Foucault getting mad at Proffessor Sugrue for "misrepresenting" or "taking cheap shots" at Foucault are hilarious. I wonder if they'd have the same vitriol if he did the same with Heidegger?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

I did the same with Heidegger, and there was lots of whining in the responses.

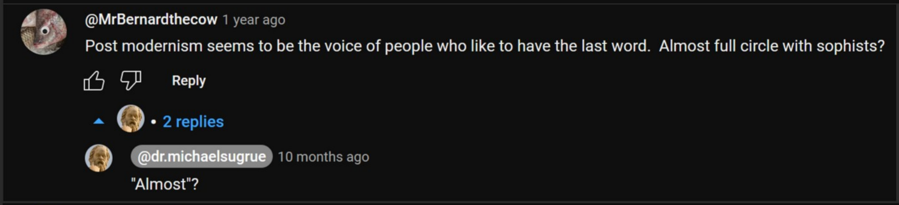


@sulevisydanmaa9981 1 year ago

ANY LECTURES ON LACAN by this fellow of plentiful of words ?   In eastern philosophy there is a maxim "words dont get it". Lacan s disciple-sisters came to the same conclusion, Irigaray in particular.   Language games are a road to ruin.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Since language is described as ruinous, yet you make this claim itself in language, we are wasting each others time. I find Irigaray, Derrida, Barthes, and the rest of that shell shocked French generation vacuous, as is the idea that telling me that "Eastern philosophy" (whatever that might be) has informed you (and then you inform me) that "words don't get it" and you enlighten me on this topic by employing a verbal maxim.

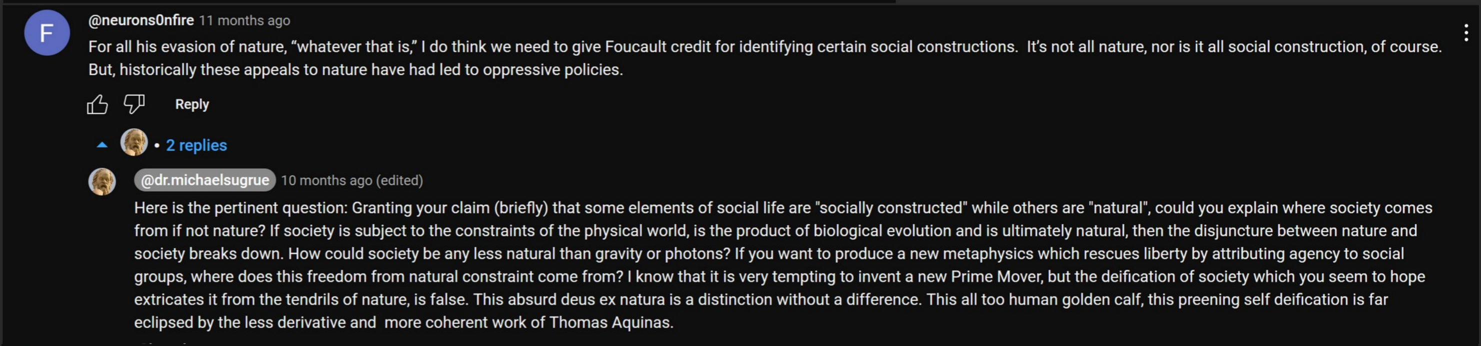


@MrBernardthecow 1 year ago

Post modernism seems to be the voice of people who like to have the last word. Almost full circle with sophists?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

"Almost"?

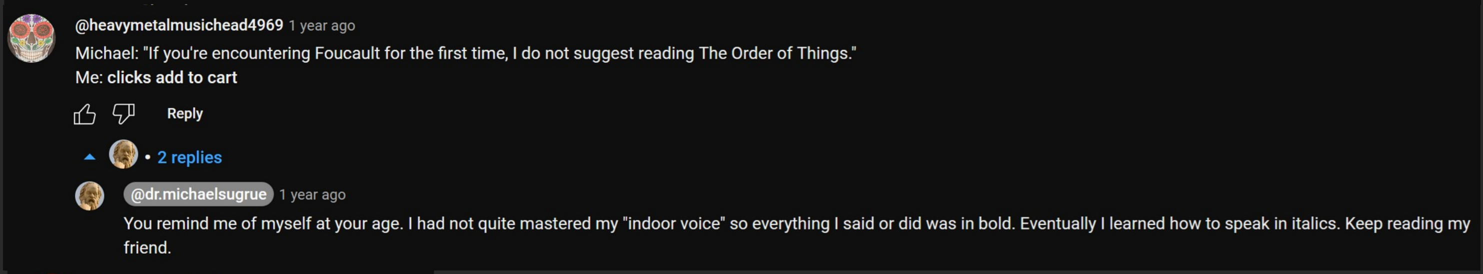


@neurons0nfire 11 months ago

For all his evasion of nature, “whatever that is,” I do think we need to give Foucault credit for identifying certain social constructions. It’s not all nature, nor is it all social construction, of course. But, historically these appeals to nature have had led to oppressive policies.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Here is the pertinent question: Granting your claim (briefly) that some elements of social life are "socially constructed" while others are "natural", could you explain where society comes from if not nature? If society is subject to the constraints of the physical world, is the product of biological evolution and is ultimately natural, then the disjuncture between nature and society breaks down. How could society be any less natural than gravity or photons? If you want to produce a new metaphysics which rescues liberty by attributing agency to social groups, where does this freedom from natural constraint come from? I know that it is very tempting to invent a new Prime Mover, but the deification of society which you seem to hope extricates it from the tendrils of nature, is false. This absurd deus ex natura is a distinction without a difference. This all too human golden calf, this preening self deification is far eclipsed by the less derivative and more coherent work of Thomas Aquinas.

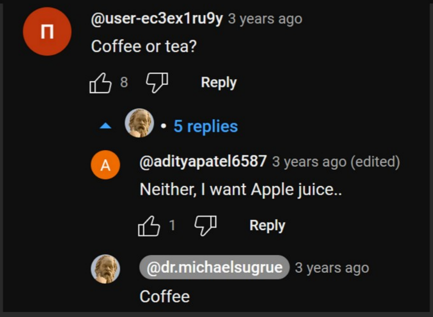


@heavymetalmusichead4969 1 year ago

Michael: "If you're encountering Foucault for the first time, I do not suggest reading The Order of Things."
Me: **clicks add to cart**

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You remind me of myself at your age. I had not quite mastered my "indoor voice" so everything I said or did was in bold. Eventually I learned how to speak in italics. Keep reading my friend.



@user-ec3ex1ru9y 3 years ago

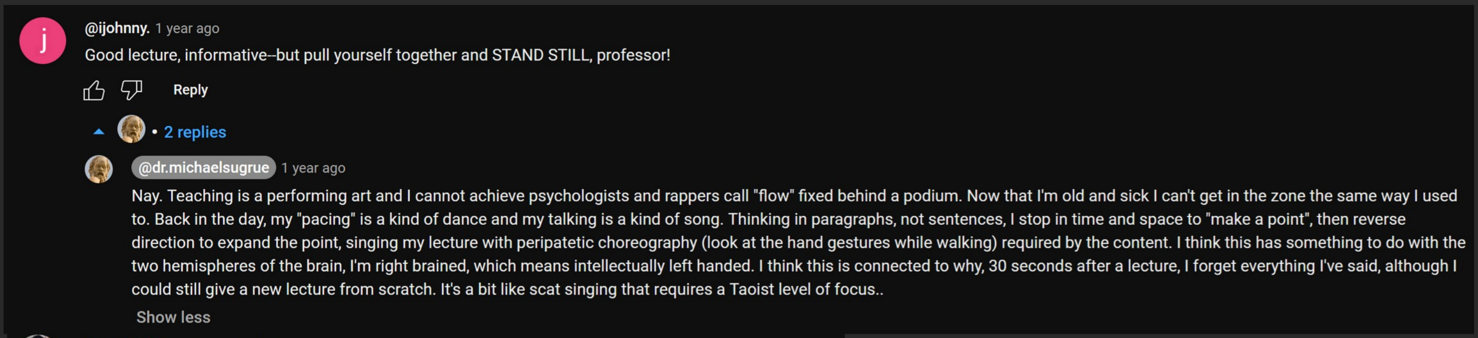
Coffee or tea?

@adityapatel6587 3 years ago (edited)

Neither, I want Apple juice..

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

Coffee

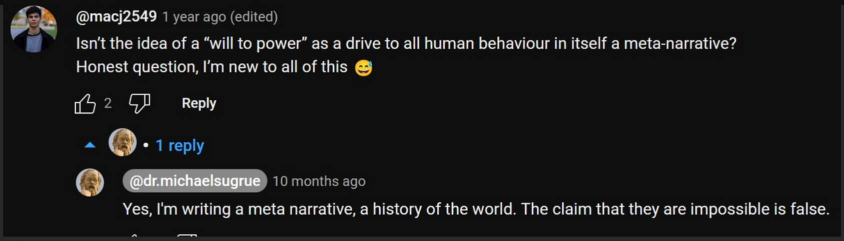


@ijohnny. 1 year ago

Good lecture, informative--but pull yourself together and STAND STILL, professor!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Nay. Teaching is a performing art and I cannot achieve psychologists and rappers call "flow" fixed behind a podium. Now that I'm old and sick I can't get in the zone the same way I used to. Back in the day, my "pacing" is a kind of dance and my talking is a kind of song. Thinking in paragraphs, not sentences, I stop in time and space to "make a point", then reverse direction to expand the point, singing my lecture with peripatetic choreography (look at the hand gestures while walking) required by the content. I think this has something to do with the two hemispheres of the brain, I'm right brained, which means intellectually left handed. I think this is connected to why, 30 seconds after a lecture, I forget everything I've said, although I could still give a new lecture from scratch. It's a bit like scat singing that requires a Taoist level of focus..

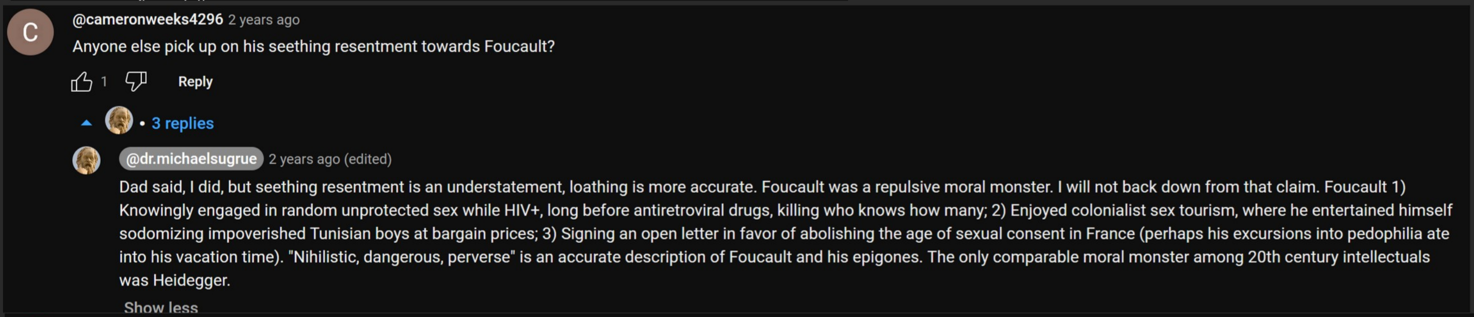


@macj2549 1 year ago (edited)

Isn't the idea of a "will to power" as a drive to all human behaviour in itself a meta-narrative?
Honest question, I'm new to all of this 😅

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Yes, I'm writing a meta narrative, a history of the world. The claim that they are impossible is false.

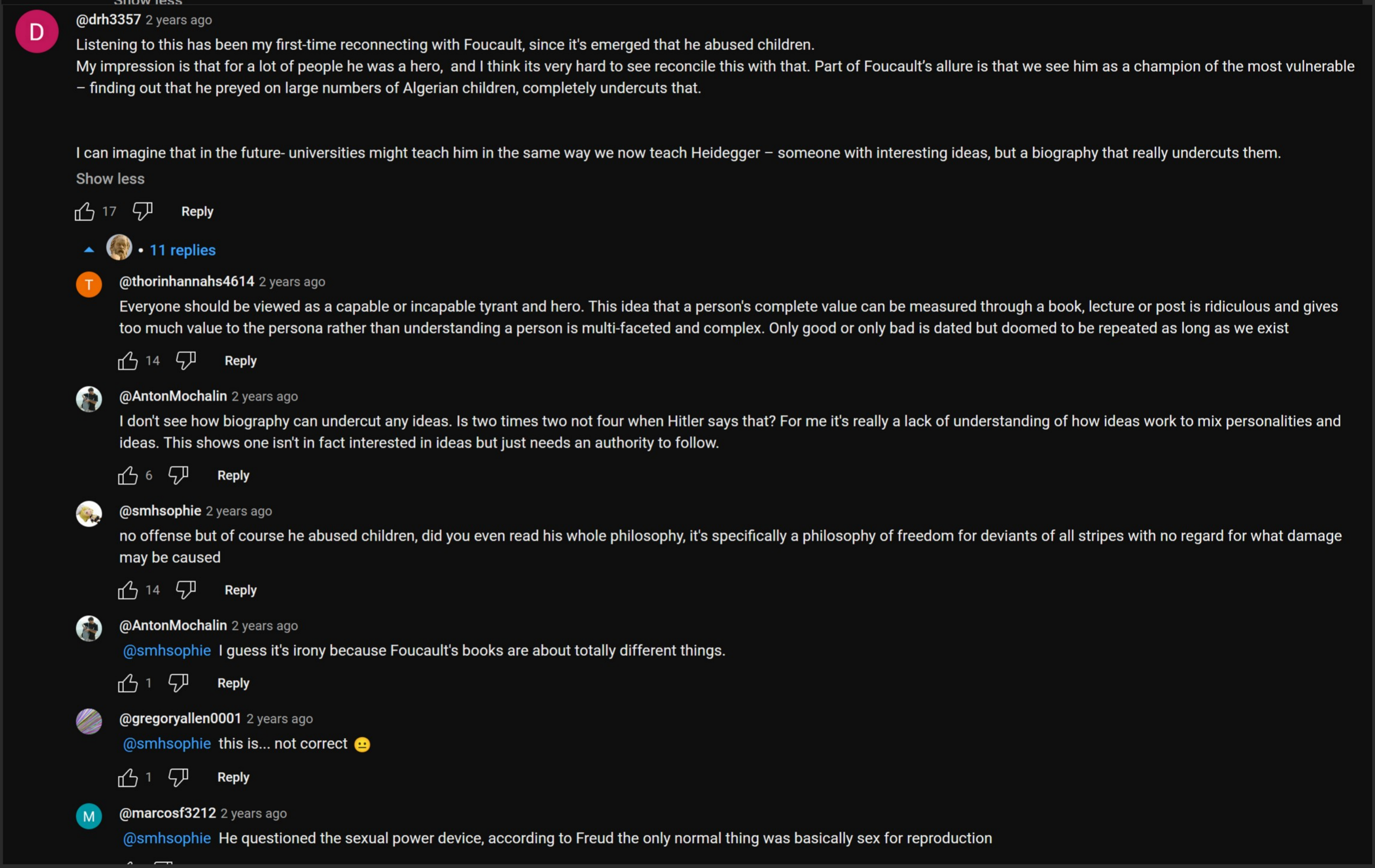


@cameronweeks4296 2 years ago

Anyone else pick up on his seething resentment towards Foucault?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, I did, but seething resentment is an understatement, loathing is more accurate. Foucault was a repulsive moral monster. I will not back down from that claim. Foucault 1) Knowingly engaged in random unprotected sex while HIV+, long before antiretroviral drugs, killing who knows how many; 2) Enjoyed colonialist sex tourism, where he entertained himself sodomizing impoverished Tunisian boys at bargain prices; 3) Signing an open letter in favor of abolishing the age of sexual consent in France (perhaps his excursions into pedophilia ate into his vacation time). "Nihilistic, dangerous, perverse" is an accurate description of Foucault and his epigones. The only comparable moral monster among 20th century intellectuals was Heidegger.



@drh3357 2 years ago

Listening to this has been my first-time reconnecting with Foucault, since it's emerged that he abused children.
My impression is that for a lot of people he was a hero, and I think its very hard to see reconcile this with that. Part of Foucault's allure is that we see him as a champion of the most vulnerable – finding out that he preyed on large numbers of Algerian children, completely undercuts that.

I can imagine that in the future- universities might teach him in the same way we now teach Heidegger – someone with interesting ideas, but a biography that really undercuts them.

@thorinhannahs4614 2 years ago

Everyone should be viewed as a capable or incapable tyrant and hero. This idea that a person's complete value can be measured through a book, lecture or post is ridiculous and gives too much value to the persona rather than understanding a person is multi-faceted and complex. Only good or only bad is dated but doomed to be repeated as long as we exist

@AntonMochalin 2 years ago

I don't see how biography can undercut any ideas. Is two times two not four when Hitler says that? For me it's really a lack of understanding of how ideas work to mix personalities and ideas. This shows one isn't in fact interested in ideas but just needs an authority to follow.

@smhsophie 2 years ago

no offense but of course he abused children, did you even read his whole philosophy, it's specifically a philosophy of freedom for deviants of all stripes with no regard for what damage may be caused

@AntonMochalin 2 years ago

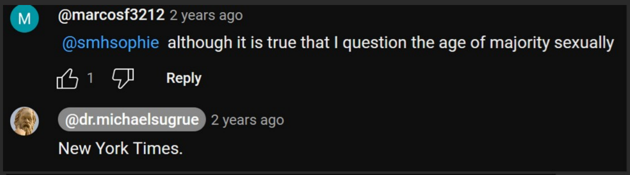
@smhsophie I guess it's irony because Foucault's books are about totally different things.

@gregoryallen0001 2 years ago

@smhsophie this is... not correct 😐

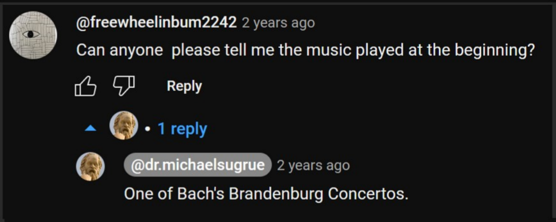
@marcosf3212 2 years ago

@smhsophie He questioned the sexual power device, according to Freud the only normal thing was basically sex for reproduction



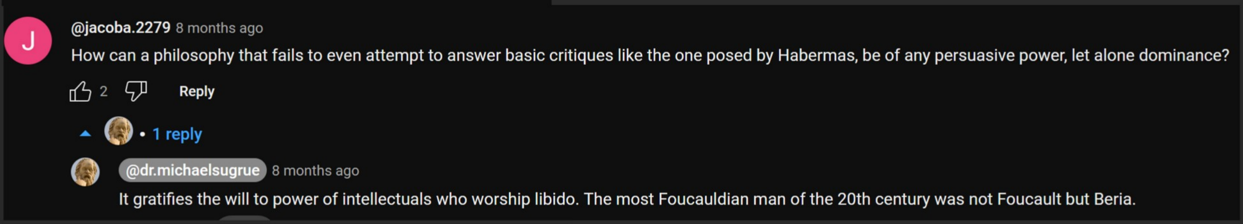
@marcosf3212 2 years ago
@smhsophie although it is true that I question the age of majority sexually

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
New York Times.



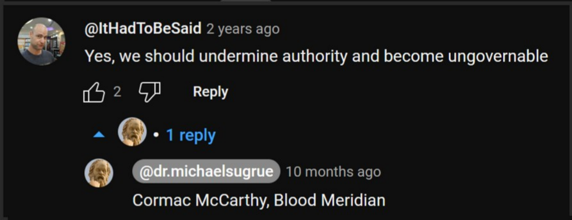
@freewheelinbum2242 2 years ago
Can anyone please tell me the music played at the beginning?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
One of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos.



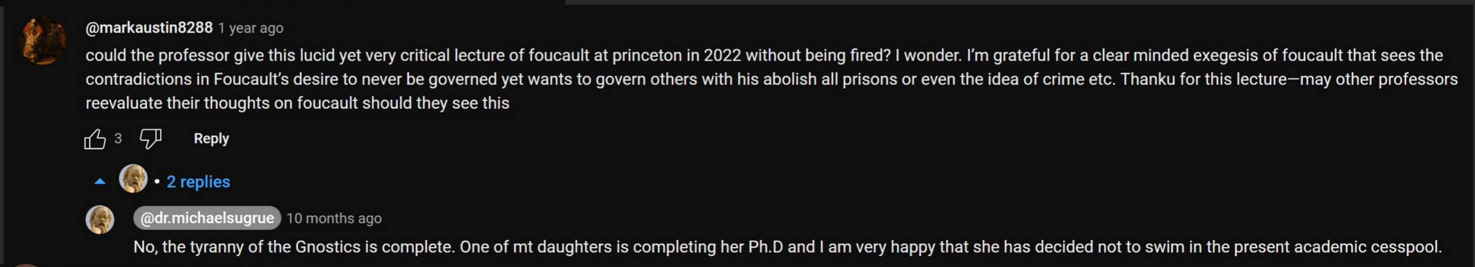
@jacoba.2279 8 months ago
How can a philosophy that fails to even attempt to answer basic critiques like the one posed by Habermas, be of any persuasive power, let alone dominance?

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago
It gratifies the will to power of intellectuals who worship libido. The most Foucauldian man of the 20th century was not Foucault but Beria.



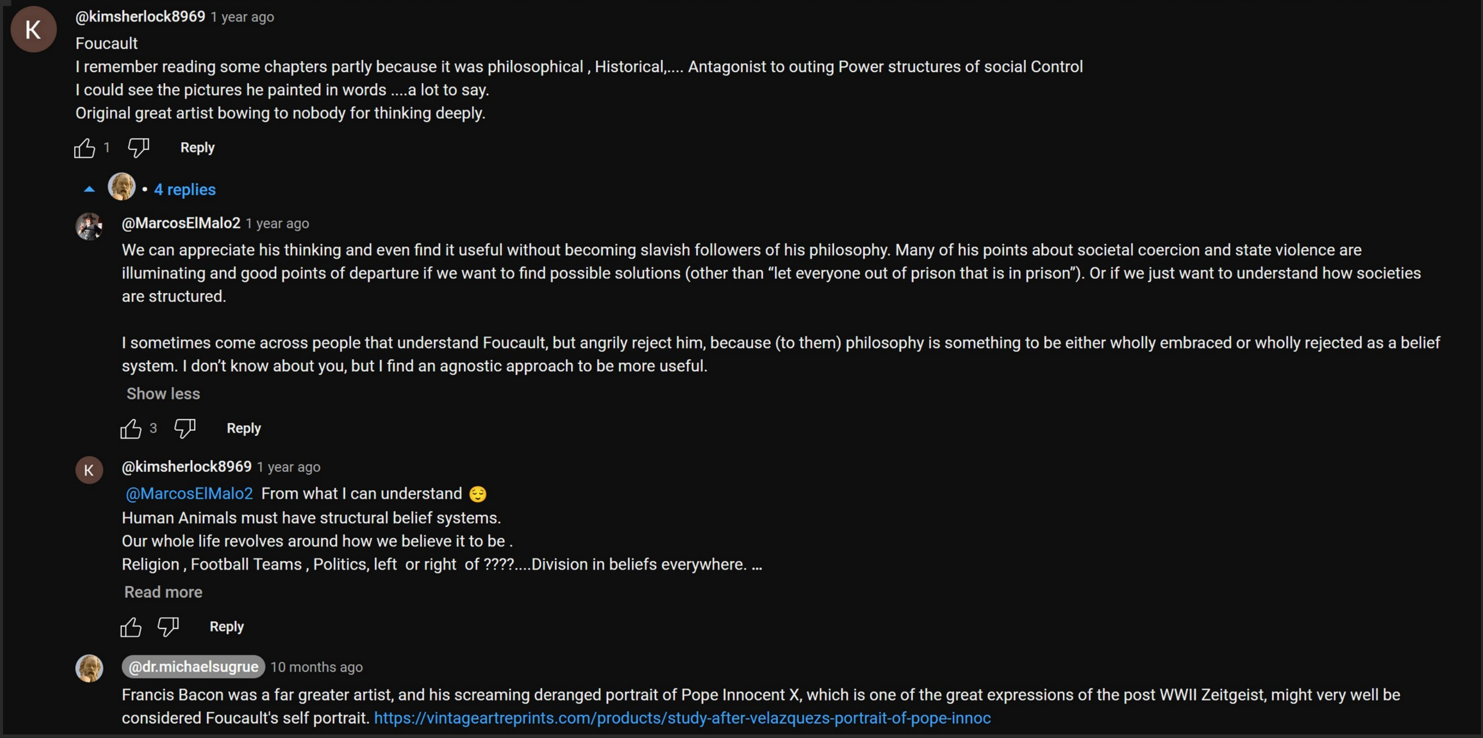
@ItHadToBeSaid 2 years ago
Yes, we should undermine authority and become ungovernable

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
Cormac McCarthy, Blood Meridian



@markaustin8288 1 year ago
could the professor give this lucid yet very critical lecture of foucault at princeton in 2022 without being fired? I wonder. I'm grateful for a clear minded exegesis of foucault that sees the contradictions in Foucault's desire to never be governed yet wants to govern others with his abolish all prisons or even the idea of crime etc. Thanku for this lecture—may other professors reevaluate their thoughts on foucault should they see this

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
No, the tyranny of the Gnostics is complete. One of mt daughters is completing her Ph.D and I am very happy that she has decided not to swim in the present academic cesspool.



@kimsherlock8969 1 year ago
Foucault
I remember reading some chapters partly because it was philosophical , Historical,.... Antagonist to outing Power structures of social Control
I could see the pictures he painted in words ....a lot to say.
Original great artist bowing to nobody for thinking deeply.

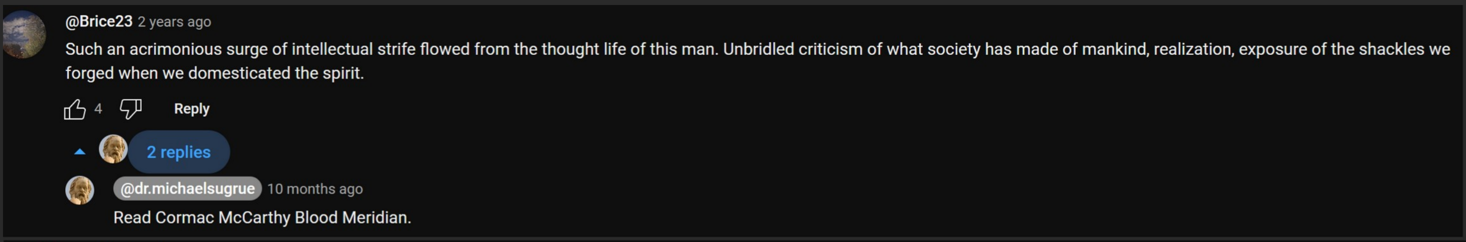
@MarcosElMalo2 1 year ago
We can appreciate his thinking and even find it useful without becoming slavish followers of his philosophy. Many of his points about societal coercion and state violence are illuminating and good points of departure if we want to find possible solutions (other than "let everyone out of prison that is in prison"). Or if we just want to understand how societies are structured.

I sometimes come across people that understand Foucault, but angrily reject him, because (to them) philosophy is something to be either wholly embraced or wholly rejected as a belief system. I don't know about you, but I find an agnostic approach to be more useful.

Show less

@kimsherlock8969 1 year ago
@MarcosElMalo2 From what I can understand 😌
Human Animals must have structural belief systems.
Our whole life revolves around how we believe it to be .
Religion , Football Teams , Politics, left or right of ????....Division in beliefs everywhere. ...
Read more

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
Francis Bacon was a far greater artist, and his screaming deranged portrait of Pope Innocent X, which is one of the great expressions of the post WWII Zeitgeist, might very well be considered Foucault's self portrait. https://vintageartreprints.com/products/study-after-velazquezs-portrait-of-pope-innoc

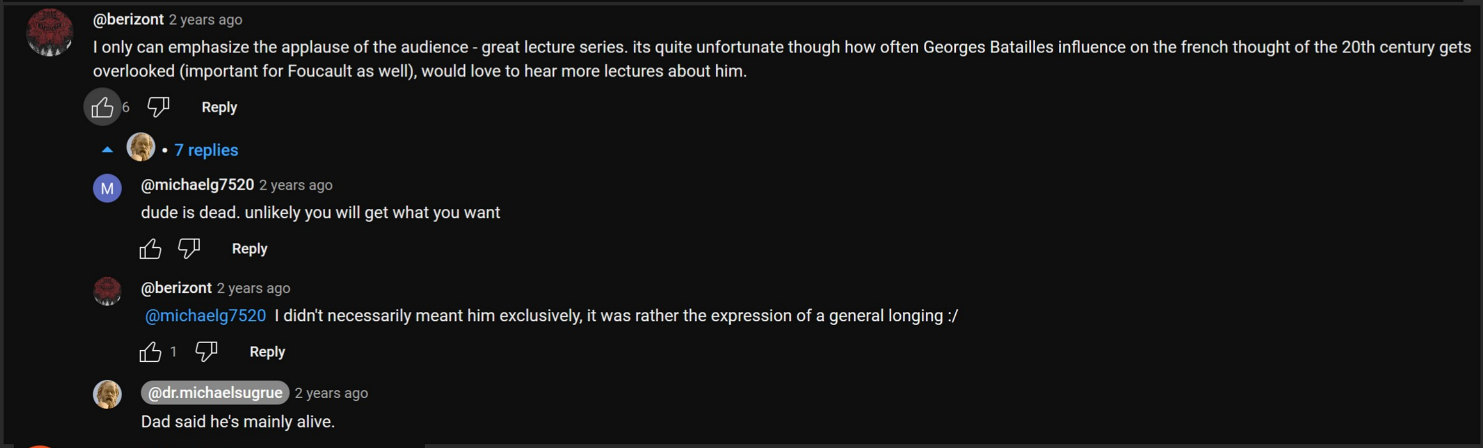


@Brice23 2 years ago

Such an acrimonious surge of intellectual strife flowed from the thought life of this man. Unbridled criticism of what society has made of mankind, realization, exposure of the shackles we forged when we domesticated the spirit.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Read Cormac McCarthy Blood Meridian.



@berizont 2 years ago

I only can emphasize the applause of the audience - great lecture series. its quite unfortunate though how often Georges Batailles influence on the french thought of the 20th century gets overlooked (important for Foucault as well), would love to hear more lectures about him.

@michaelg7520 2 years ago

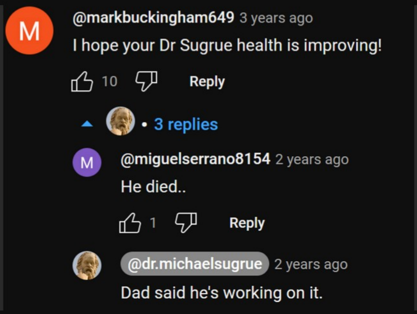
dude is dead. unlikely you will get what you want

@berizont 2 years ago

@michaelg7520 I didn't necessarily meant him exclusively, it was rather the expression of a general longing :/

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he's mainly alive.



@markbuckingham649 3 years ago

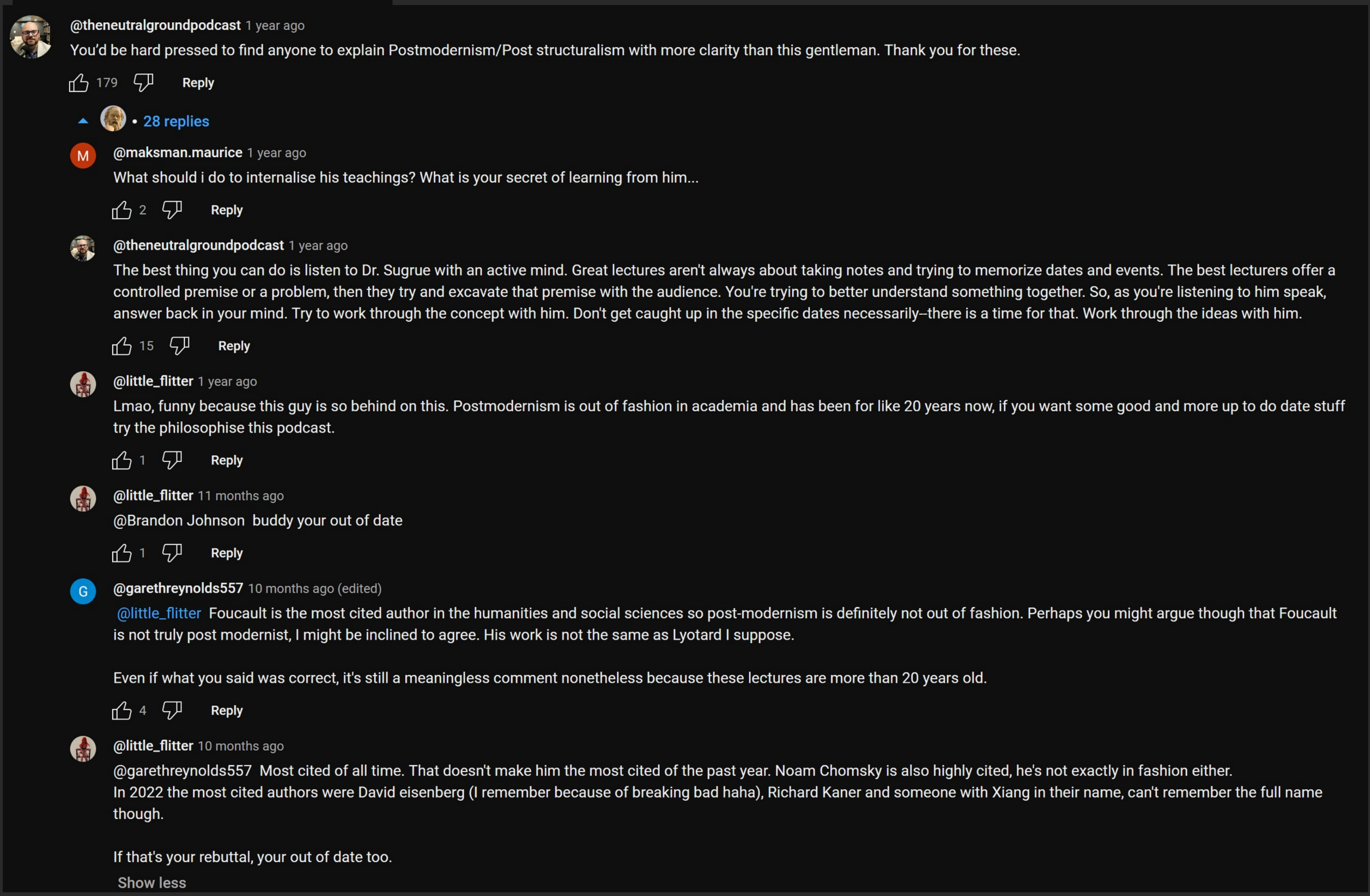
I hope your Dr Sugrue health is improving!

@miguelserrano8154 2 years ago

He died..

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he's working on it.



@theneutralgroundpodcast 1 year ago

You'd be hard pressed to find anyone to explain Postmodernism/Post structuralism with more clarity than this gentleman. Thank you for these.

@maksman.maurice 1 year ago

What should i do to internalise his teachings? What is your secret of learning from him...

@theneutralgroundpodcast 1 year ago

The best thing you can do is listen to Dr. Sugrue with an active mind. Great lectures aren't always about taking notes and trying to memorize dates and events. The best lecturers offer a controlled premise or a problem, then they try and excavate that premise with the audience. You're trying to better understand something together. So, as you're listening to him speak, answer back in your mind. Try to work through the concept with him. Don't get caught up in the specific dates necessarily--there is a time for that. Work through the ideas with him.

@little_flitter 1 year ago

Lmao, funny because this guy is so behind on this. Postmodernism is out of fashion in academia and has been for like 20 years now, if you want some good and more up to do date stuff try the philosophise this podcast.

@little_flitter 11 months ago

@Brandon Johnson buddy your out of date

@garethreynolds557 10 months ago (edited)

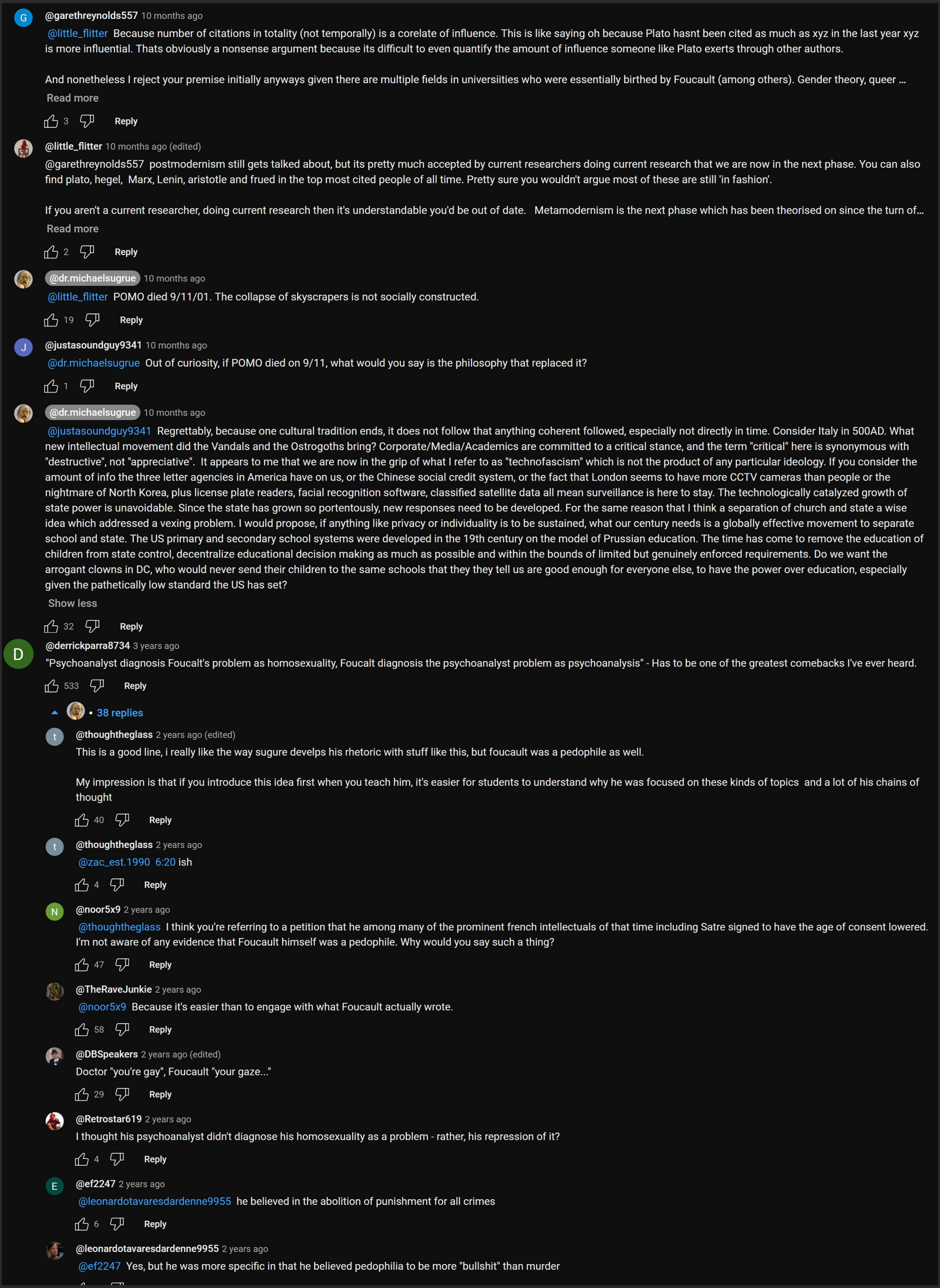
@little_flitter Foucault is the most cited author in the humanities and social sciences so post-modernism is definitely not out of fashion. Perhaps you might argue though that Foucault is not truly post modernist, I might be inclined to agree. His work is not the same as Lyotard I suppose.

Even if what you said was correct, it's still a meaningless comment nonetheless because these lectures are more than 20 years old.

@little_flitter 10 months ago

@garethreynolds557 Most cited of all time. That doesn't make him the most cited of the past year. Noam Chomsky is also highly cited, he's not exactly in fashion either.
In 2022 the most cited authors were David eisenberg (I remember because of breaking bad haha), Richard Kaner and someone with Xiang in their name, can't remember the full name though.

If that's your rebuttal, your out of date too.



@garethreynolds557 10 months ago

@little_flitter Because number of citations in totality (not temporally) is a corelate of influence. This is like saying oh because Plato hasnt been cited as much as xyz in the last year xyz is more influential. Thats obviously a nonsense argument because its difficult to even quantify the amount of influence someone like Plato exerts through other authors.

And nonetheless I reject your premise initially anyways given there are multiple fields in universiities who were essentially birthed by Foucault (among others). Gender theory, queer ...

Read more

3 Reply

@little_flitter 10 months ago (edited)

@garethreynolds557 postmodernism still gets talked about, but its pretty much accepted by current researchers doing current research that we are now in the next phase. You can also find plato, hegel, Marx, Lenin, aristotle and frued in the top most cited people of all time. Pretty sure you wouldn't argue most of these are still 'in fashion'.

If you aren't a current researcher, doing current research then it's understandable you'd be out of date. Metamodernism is the next phase which has been theorised on since the turn of...

Read more

2 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

@little_flitter POMO died 9/11/01. The collapse of skyscrapers is not socially constructed.

19 Reply

@justasoundguy9341 10 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Out of curiosity, if POMO died on 9/11, what would you say is the philosophy that replaced it?

1 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

@justasoundguy9341 Regrettably, because one cultural tradition ends, it does not follow that anything coherent followed, especially not directly in time. Consider Italy in 500AD. What new intellectual movement did the Vandals and the Ostrogoths bring? Corporate/Media/Academics are committed to a critical stance, and the term "critical" here is synonymous with "destructive", not "appreciative". It appears to me that we are now in the grip of what I refer to as "technofascism" which is not the product of any particular ideology. If you consider the amount of info the three letter agencies in America have on us, or the Chinese social credit system, or the fact that London seems to have more CCTV cameras than people or the nightmare of North Korea, plus license plate readers, facial recognition software, classified satellite data all mean surveillance is here to stay. The technologically catalyzed growth of state power is unavoidable. Since the state has grown so portentously, new responses need to be developed. For the same reason that I think a separation of church and state a wise idea which addressed a vexing problem. I would propose, if anything like privacy or individuality is to be sustained, what our century needs is a globally effective movement to separate school and state. The US primary and secondary school systems were developed in the 19th century on the model of Prussian education. The time has come to remove the education of children from state control, decentralize educational decision making as much as possible and within the bounds of limited but genuinely enforced requirements. Do we want the arrogant clowns in DC, who would never send their children to the same schools that they they tell us are good enough for everyone else, to have the power over education, especially given the pathetically low standard the US has set?

Show less

32 Reply

@derrickparra8734 3 years ago

"Psychoanalyst diagnosis Foucalt's problem as homosexuality, Foucalt diagnosis the psychoanalyst problem as psychoanalysis" - Has to be one of the greatest comebacks I've ever heard.

533 Reply

• 38 replies

@thoughtheglass 2 years ago (edited)

This is a good line, i really like the way sugure develps his rhetoric with stuff like this, but foucault was a pedophile as well.

My impression is that if you introduce this idea first when you teach him, it's easier for students to understand why he was focused on these kinds of topics and a lot of his chains of thought

40 Reply

@thoughtheglass 2 years ago

@zac_est.1990 6:20 ish

4 Reply

@noor5x9 2 years ago

@thoughtheglass I think you're referring to a petition that he among many of the prominent french intellectuals of that time including Satre signed to have the age of consent lowered. I'm not aware of any evidence that Foucault himself was a pedophile. Why would you say such a thing?

47 Reply

@TheRaveJunkie 2 years ago

@noor5x9 Because it's easier than to engage with what Foucault actually wrote.

58 Reply

@DBSpeakers 2 years ago (edited)

Doctor "you're gay", Foucault "your gaze..."

29 Reply

@Retrostar619 2 years ago

I thought his psychoanalyst didn't diagnose his homosexuality as a problem - rather, his repression of it?

4 Reply

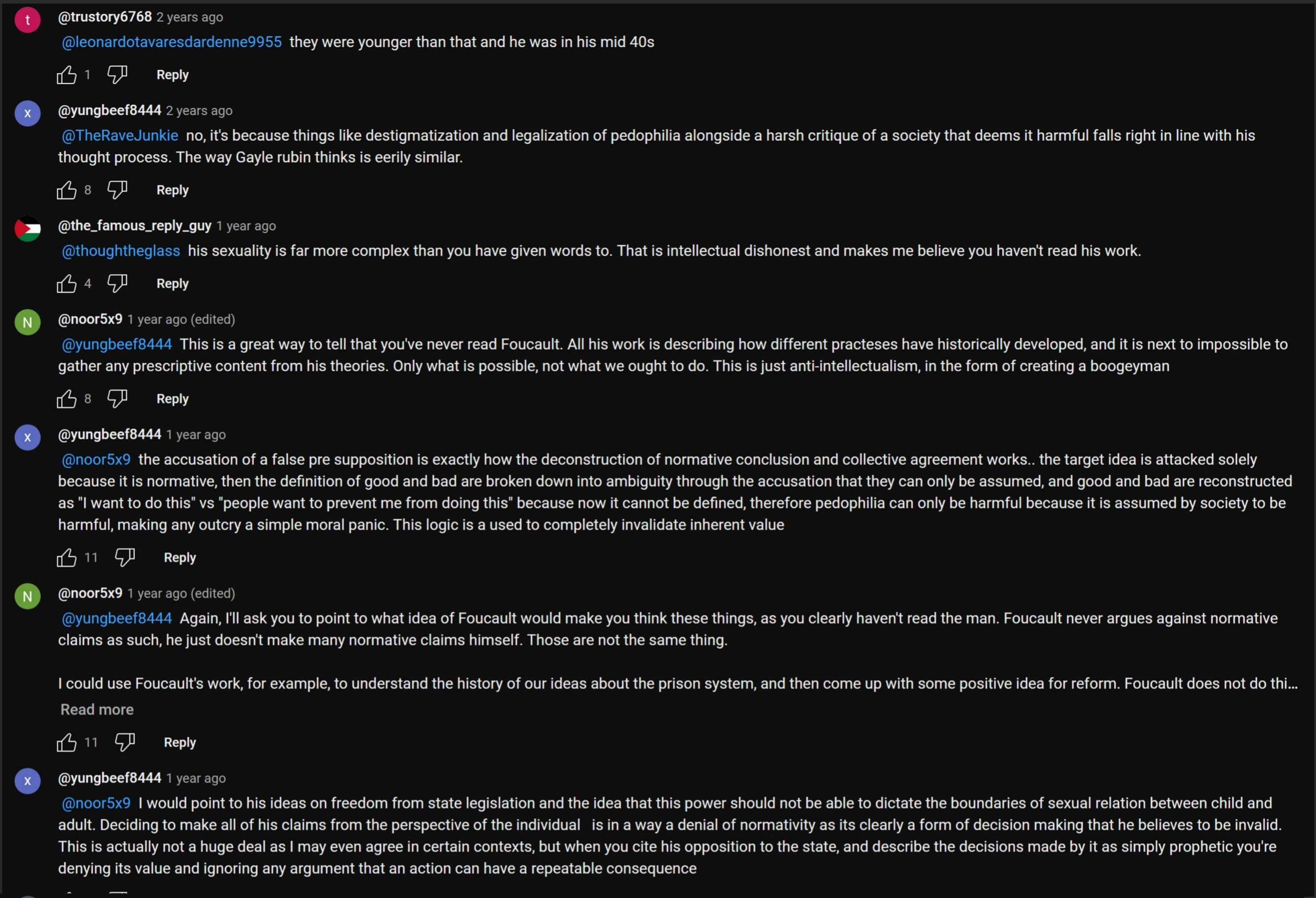
@ef2247 2 years ago

@leonardotavaresdardenne9955 he believed in the abolition of punishment for all crimes

6 Reply

@leonardotavaresdardenne9955 2 years ago

@ef2247 Yes, but he was more specific in that he believed pedophilia to be more "bullshit" than murder



@trustory6768 2 years ago

@leonardotavaresdardenne9955 they were younger than that and he was in his mid 40s

@yungbeef8444 2 years ago

@TheRaveJunkie no, it's because things like destigmatization and legalization of pedophilia alongside a harsh critique of a society that deems it harmful falls right in line with his thought process. The way Gayle rubin thinks is eerily similar.

@the_famous_reply_guy 1 year ago

@thoughtheglass his sexuality is far more complex than you have given words to. That is intellectual dishonest and makes me believe you haven't read his work.

@noor5x9 1 year ago (edited)

@yungbeef8444 This is a great way to tell that you've never read Foucault. All his work is describing how different practeses have historically developed, and it is next to impossible to gather any prescriptive content from his theories. Only what is possible, not what we ought to do. This is just anti-intellectualism, in the form of creating a boogeyman

@yungbeef8444 1 year ago

@noor5x9 the accusation of a false pre supposition is exactly how the deconstruction of normative conclusion and collective agreement works.. the target idea is attacked solely because it is normative, then the definition of good and bad are broken down into ambiguity through the accusation that they can only be assumed, and good and bad are reconstructed as "I want to do this" vs "people want to prevent me from doing this" because now it cannot be defined, therefore pedophilia can only be harmful because it is assumed by society to be harmful, making any outcry a simple moral panic. This logic is a used to completely invalidate inherent value

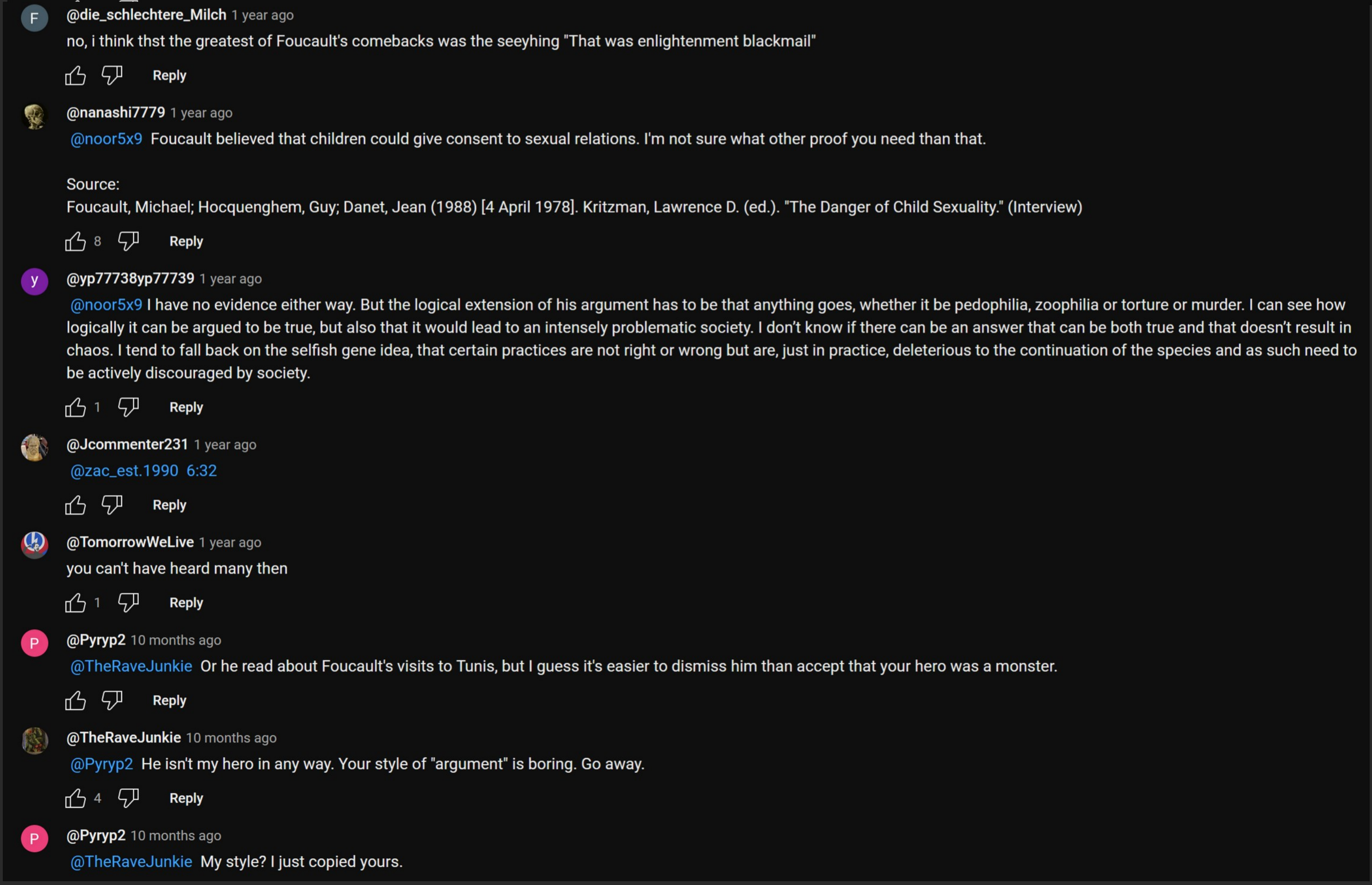
@noor5x9 1 year ago (edited)

@yungbeef8444 Again, I'll ask you to point to what idea of Foucault would make you think these things, as you clearly haven't read the man. Foucault never argues against normative claims as such, he just doesn't make many normative claims himself. Those are not the same thing.

I could use Foucault's work, for example, to understand the history of our ideas about the prison system, and then come up with some positive idea for reform. Foucault does not do thi...

@yungbeef8444 1 year ago

@noor5x9 I would point to his ideas on freedom from state legislation and the idea that this power should not be able to dictate the boundaries of sexual relation between child and adult. Deciding to make all of his claims from the perspective of the individual is in a way a denial of normativity as its clearly a form of decision making that he believes to be invalid. This is actually not a huge deal as I may even agree in certain contexts, but when you cite his opposition to the state, and describe the decisions made by it as simply prophetic you're denying its value and ignoring any argument that an action can have a repeatable consequence



@die_schlechtere_Milch 1 year ago

no, i think thst the greatest of Foucault's comebacks was the seeyhing "That was enlightenment blackmail"

@nanashi7779 1 year ago

@noor5x9 Foucault believed that children could give consent to sexual relations. I'm not sure what other proof you need than that.

Source:
Foucault, Michael; Hocquenghem, Guy; Danet, Jean (1988) [4 April 1978]. Kritzman, Lawrence D. (ed.). "The Danger of Child Sexuality." (Interview)

@yp77738yp77739 1 year ago

@noor5x9 I have no evidence either way. But the logical extension of his argument has to be that anything goes, whether it be pedophilia, zoophilia or torture or murder. I can see how logically it can be argued to be true, but also that it would lead to an intensely problematic society. I don't know if there can be an answer that can be both true and that doesn't result in chaos. I tend to fall back on the selfish gene idea, that certain practices are not right or wrong but are, just in practice, deleterious to the continuation of the species and as such need to be actively discouraged by society.

@Jcommenter231 1 year ago

@zac_est.1990 6:32

@TomorrowWeLive 1 year ago

you can't have heard many then

@Pyryp2 10 months ago

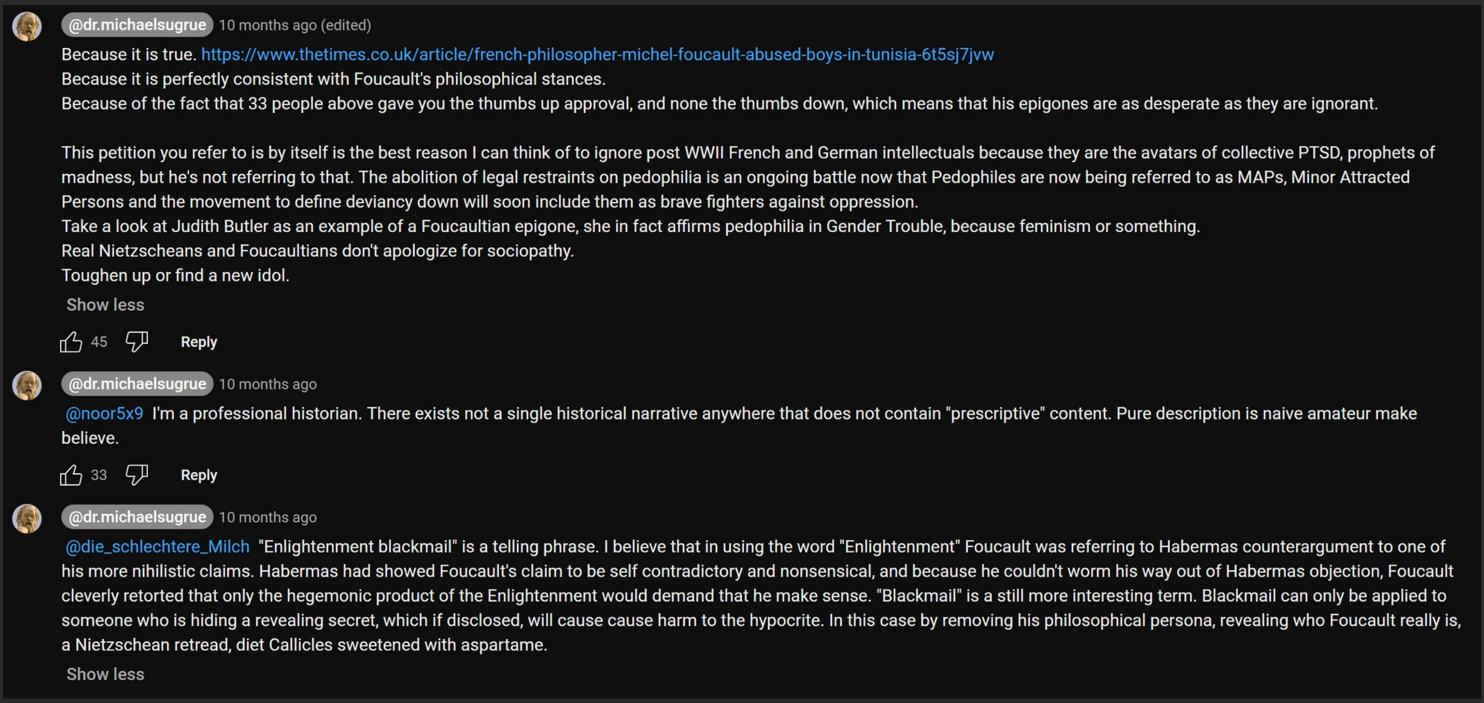
@TheRaveJunkie Or he read about Foucault's visits to Tunis, but I guess it's easier to dismiss him than accept that your hero was a monster.

@TheRaveJunkie 10 months ago

@Pyryp2 He isn't my hero in any way. Your style of "argument" is boring. Go away.

@Pyryp2 10 months ago

@TheRaveJunkie My style? I just copied yours.



@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Because it is true. https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/french-philosopher-michel-foucault-abused-boys-in-tunisia-6t5sj7jvw
Because it is perfectly consistent with Foucault's philosophical stances.
Because of the fact that 33 people above gave you the thumbs up approval, and none the thumbs down, which means that his epigones are as desperate as they are ignorant.

This petition you refer to is by itself is the best reason I can think of to ignore post WWII French and German intellectuals because they are the avatars of collective PTSD, prophets of madness, but he's not referring to that. The abolition of legal restraints on pedophilia is an ongoing battle now that Pedophiles are now being referred to as MAPs, Minor Attracted Persons and the movement to define deviancy down will soon include them as brave fighters against oppression.
Take a look at Judith Butler as an example of a Foucaultian epigone, she in fact affirms pedophilia in Gender Trouble, because feminism or something.
Real Nietzscheans and Foucaultians don't apologize for sociopathy.
Toughen up or find a new idol.

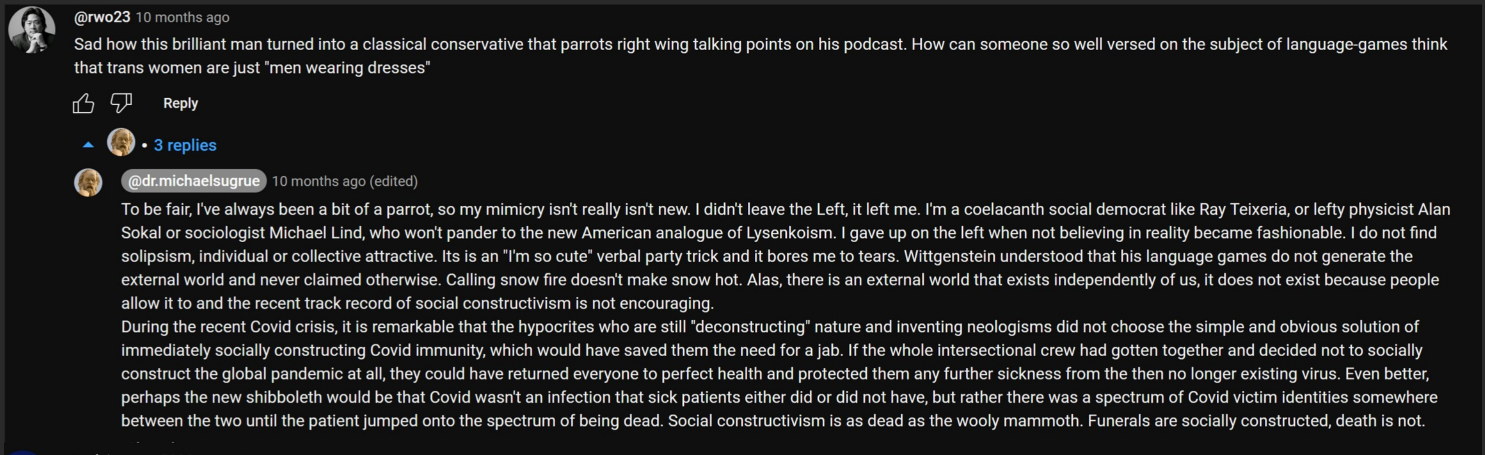
@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

@noor5x9 I'm a professional historian. There exists not a single historical narrative anywhere that does not contain "prescriptive" content. Pure description is naive amateur make believe.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

@die_schlechtere_Milch "Enlightenment blackmail" is a telling phrase. I believe that in using the word "Enlightenment" Foucault was referring to Habermas counterargument to one of his more nihilistic claims. Habermas had showed Foucault's claim to be self contradictory and nonsensical, and because he couldn't worm his way out of Habermas objection, Foucault cleverly retorted that only the hegemonic product of the Enlightenment would demand that he make sense. "Blackmail" is a still more interesting term. Blackmail can only be applied to someone who is hiding a revealing secret, which if disclosed, will cause cause harm to the hypocrite. In this case by removing his philosophical persona, revealing who Foucault really is, a Nietzschean retread, diet Callicles sweetened with aspartame.

Jean-Francois Lyotard: The Post-modern Condition

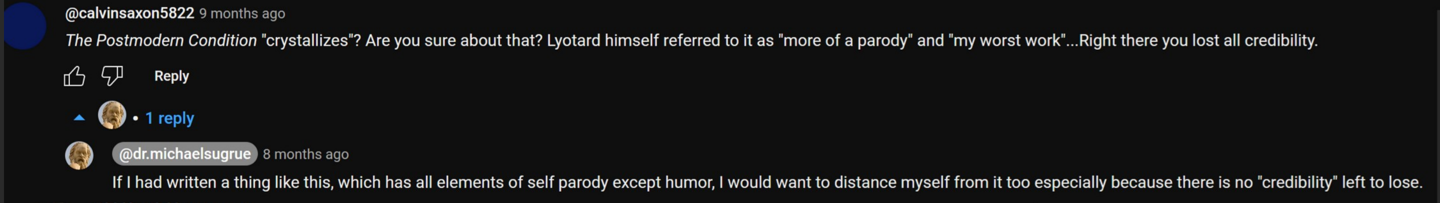


@rwo23 10 months ago

Sad how this brilliant man turned into a classical conservative that parrots right wing talking points on his podcast. How can someone so well versed on the subject of language-games think that trans women are just "men wearing dresses"

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

To be fair, I've always been a bit of a parrot, so my mimicry isn't really isn't new. I didn't leave the Left, it left me. I'm a coelacanth social democrat like Ray Teixeria, or lefty physicist Alan Sokal or sociologist Michael Lind, who won't pander to the new American analogue of Lysenkoism. I gave up on the left when not believing in reality became fashionable. I do not find solipsism, individual or collective attractive. Its is an "I'm so cute" verbal party trick and it bores me to tears. Wittgenstein understood that his language games do not generate the external world and never claimed otherwise. Calling snow fire doesn't make snow hot. Alas, there is an external world that exists independently of us, it does not exist because people allow it to and the recent track record of social constructivism is not encouraging.
During the recent Covid crisis, it is remarkable that the hypocrites who are still "deconstructing" nature and inventing neologisms did not choose the simple and obvious solution of immediately socially constructing Covid immunity, which would have saved them the need for a jab. If the whole intersectional crew had gotten together and decided not to socially construct the global pandemic at all, they could have returned everyone to perfect health and protected them any further sickness from the then no longer existing virus. Even better, perhaps the new shibboleth would be that Covid wasn't an infection that sick patients either did or did not have, but rather there was a spectrum of Covid victim identities somewhere between the two until the patient jumped onto the spectrum of being dead. Social constructivism is as dead as the wooly mammoth. Funerals are socially constructed, death is not.

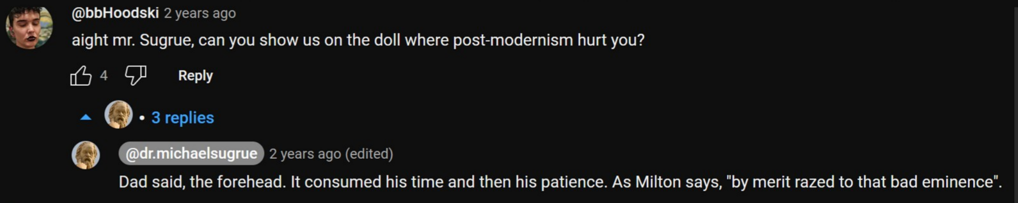


@calvinsaxon5822 9 months ago

The Postmodern Condition "crystallizes"? Are you sure about that? Lyotard himself referred to it as "more of a parody" and "my worst work"...Right there you lost all credibility.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

If I had written a thing like this, which has all elements of self parody except humor, I would want to distance myself from it too especially because there is no "credibility" left to lose.

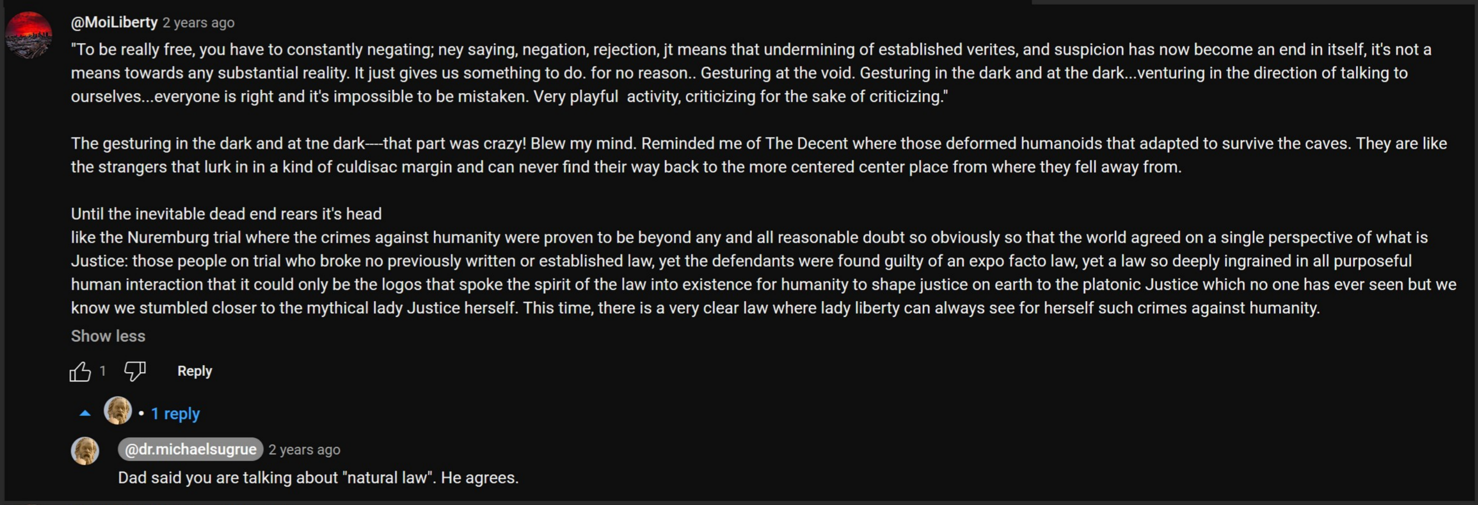


@bbHoodski 2 years ago

aight mr. Sugrue, can you show us on the doll where post-modernism hurt you?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, the forehead. It consumed his time and then his patience. As Milton says, "by merit razed to that bad eminence".



@MoiLiberty 2 years ago

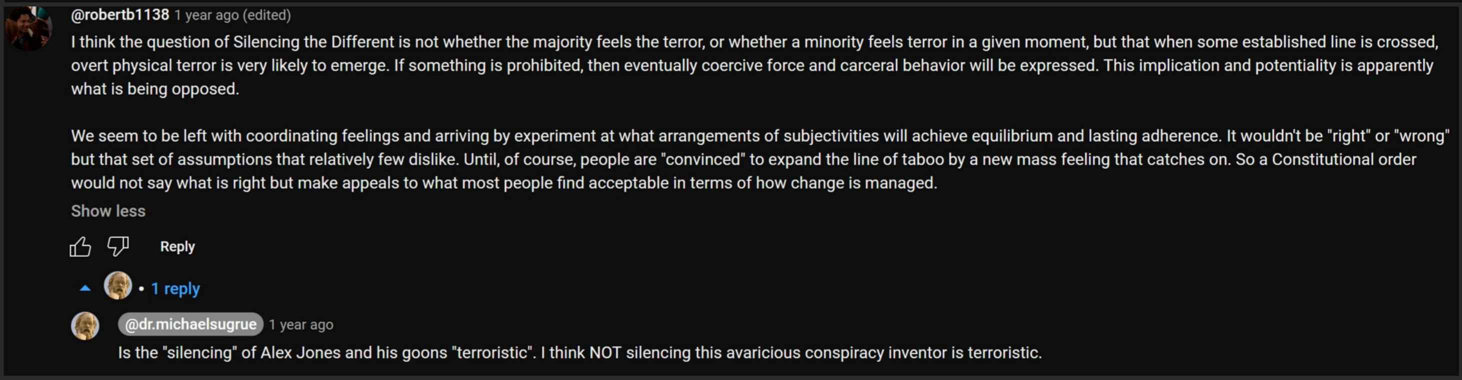
"To be really free, you have to constantly negating; ney saying, negation, rejection, jt means that undermining of established verites, and suspicion has now become an end in itself, it's not a means towards any substantial reality. It just gives us something to do. for no reason.. Gesturing at the void. Gesturing in the dark and at the dark...venturing in the direction of talking to ourselves...everyone is right and it's impossible to be mistaken. Very playful activity, criticizing for the sake of criticizing."

The gesturing in the dark and at tne dark—that part was crazy! Blew my mind. Reminded me of The Decent where those deformed humanoids that adapted to survive the caves. They are like the strangers that lurk in in a kind of culdisac margin and can never find their way back to the more centered center place from where they fell away from.

Until the inevitable dead end rears it's head
like the Nuremburg trial where the crimes against humanity were proven to be beyond any and all reasonable doubt so obviously so that the world agreed on a single perspective of what is Justice: those people on trial who broke no previously written or established law, yet the defendants were found guilty of an expo facto law, yet a law so deeply ingrained in all purposeful human interaction that it could only be the logos that spoke the spirit of the law into existence for humanity to shape justice on earth to the platonic Justice which no one has ever seen but we know we stumbled closer to the mythical lady Justice herself. This time, there is a very clear law where lady liberty can always see for herself such crimes against humanity.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said you are talking about "natural law". He agrees.



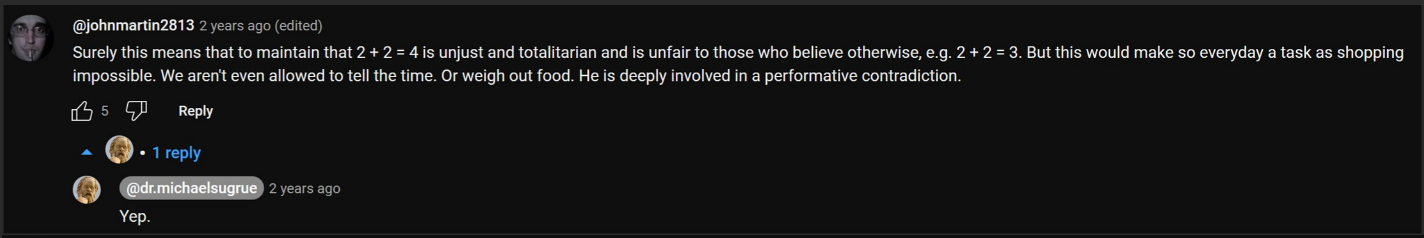
@robertb1138 1 year ago (edited)

I think the question of Silencing the Different is not whether the majority feels the terror, or whether a minority feels terror in a given moment, but that when some established line is crossed, overt physical terror is very likely to emerge. If something is prohibited, then eventually coercive force and carceral behavior will be expressed. This implication and potentiality is apparently what is being opposed.

We seem to be left with coordinating feelings and arriving by experiment at what arrangements of subjectivities will achieve equilibrium and lasting adherence. It wouldn't be "right" or "wrong" but that set of assumptions that relatively few dislike. Until, of course, people are "convinced" to expand the line of taboo by a new mass feeling that catches on. So a Constitutional order would not say what is right but make appeals to what most people find acceptable in terms of how change is managed.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Is the "silencing" of Alex Jones and his goons "terroristic". I think NOT silencing this avaricious conspiracy inventor is terroristic.

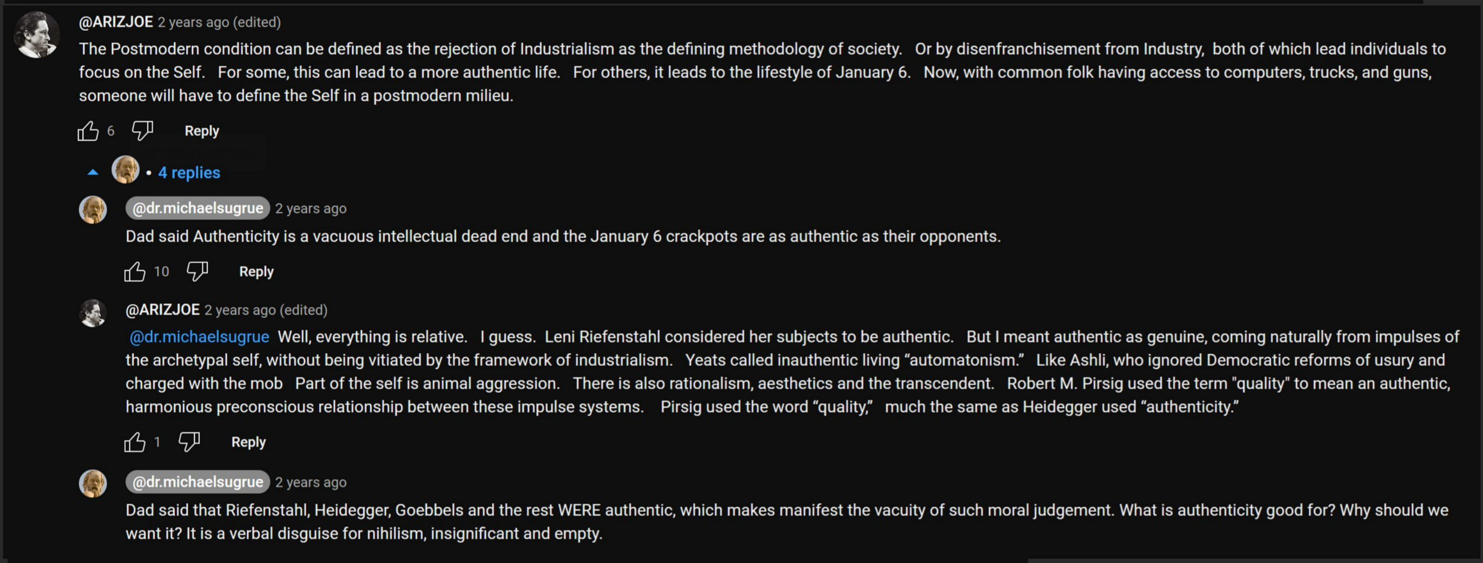


@johnmartin2813 2 years ago (edited)

Surely this means that to maintain that 2 + 2 = 4 is unjust and totalitarian and is unfair to those who believe otherwise, e.g. 2 + 2 = 3. But this would make so everyday a task as shopping impossible. We aren't even allowed to tell the time. Or weigh out food. He is deeply involved in a performative contradiction.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Yep.



@ARIZJOE 2 years ago (edited)

The Postmodern condition can be defined as the rejection of Industrialism as the defining methodology of society. Or by disenfranchisement from Industry, both of which lead individuals to focus on the Self. For some, this can lead to a more authentic life. For others, it leads to the lifestyle of January 6. Now, with common folk having access to computers, trucks, and guns, someone will have to define the Self in a postmodern milieu.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

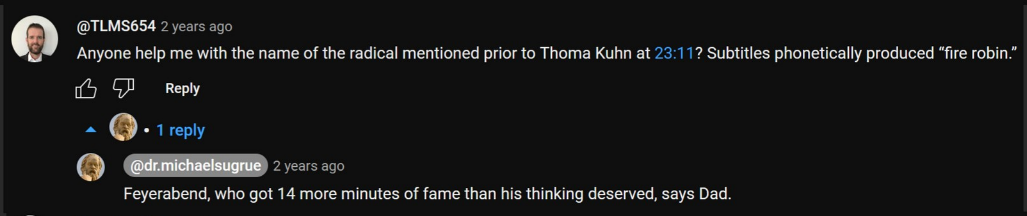
Dad said Authenticity is a vacuous intellectual dead end and the January 6 crackpots are as authentic as their opponents.

@ARIZJOE 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue Well, everything is relative. I guess. Leni Riefenstahl considered her subjects to be authentic. But I meant authentic as genuine, coming naturally from impulses of the archetypal self, without being vitiated by the framework of industrialism. Yeats called inauthentic living "automatonism." Like Ashli, who ignored Democratic reforms of usury and charged with the mob Part of the self is animal aggression. There is also rationalism, aesthetics and the transcendent. Robert M. Pirsig used the term "quality" to mean an authentic, harmonious preconscious relationship between these impulse systems. Pirsig used the word "quality," much the same as Heidegger used "authenticity."

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said that Riefenstahl, Heidegger, Goebbels and the rest WERE authentic, which makes manifest the vacuity of such moral judgement. What is authenticity good for? Why should we want it? It is a verbal disguise for nihilism, insignificant and empty.

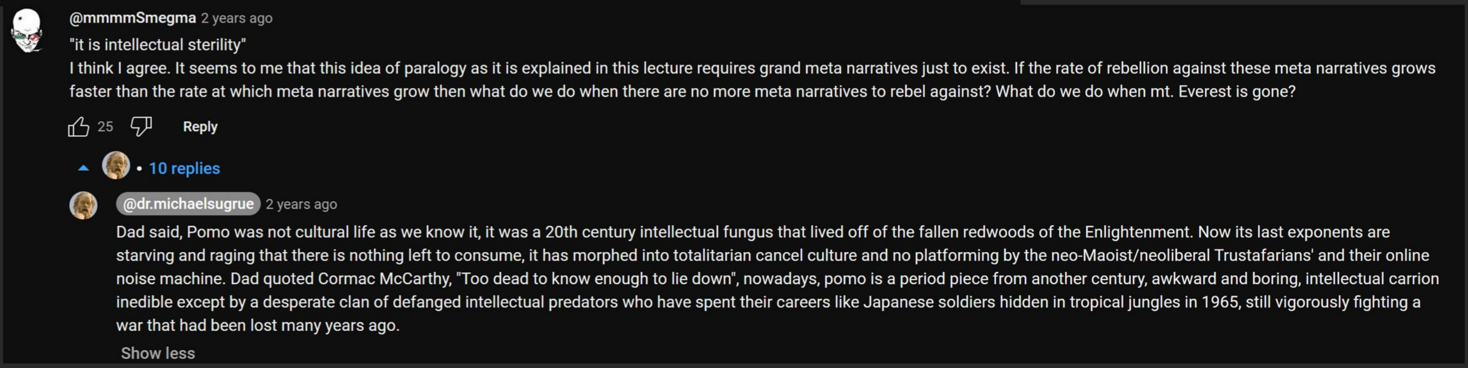


@TLMS654 2 years ago

Anyone help me with the name of the radical mentioned prior to Thoma Kuhn at 23:11? Subtitles phonetically produced "fire robin."

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Feyerabend, who got 14 more minutes of fame than his thinking deserved, says Dad.



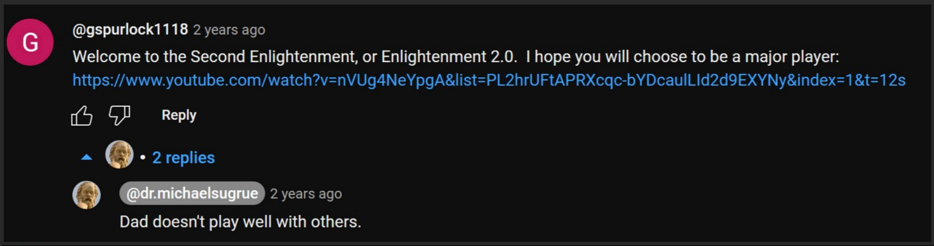
@mmmmSmegma 2 years ago

"it is intellectual sterility"
I think I agree. It seems to me that this idea of paralogy as it is explained in this lecture requires grand meta narratives just to exist. If the rate of rebellion against these meta narratives grows faster than the rate at which meta narratives grow then what do we do when there are no more meta narratives to rebel against? What do we do when mt. Everest is gone?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Pomo was not cultural life as we know it, it was a 20th century intellectual fungus that lived off of the fallen redwoods of the Enlightenment. Now its last exponents are starving and raging that there is nothing left to consume, it has morphed into totalitarian cancel culture and no platforming by the neo-Maoist/neoliberal Trustafarians' and their online noise machine. Dad quoted Cormac McCarthy, "Too dead to know enough to lie down", nowadays, pomo is a period piece from another century, awkward and boring, intellectual carrion inedible except by a desperate clan of defanged intellectual predators who have spent their careers like Japanese soldiers hidden in tropical jungles in 1965, still vigorously fighting a war that had been lost many years ago.

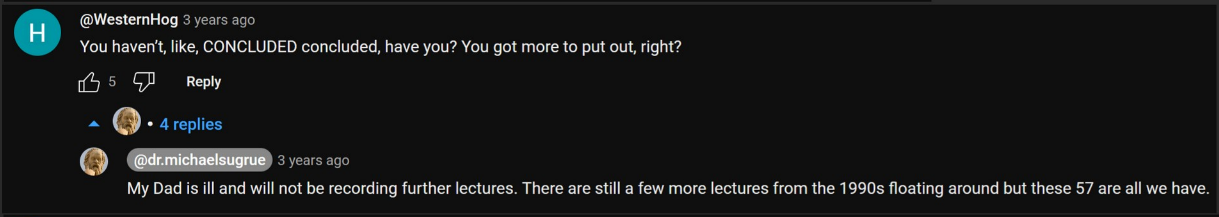
Conclusion: Political, Social and Cultural Criticism and Theory


@gspurlock1118 2 years ago

Welcome to the Second Enlightenment, or Enlightenment 2.0. I hope you will choose to be a major player:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVUg4NeYpgA&list=PL2hrUFtAPRXcqc-bYDcaulLId2d9EXYNy&index=1&t=12s

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

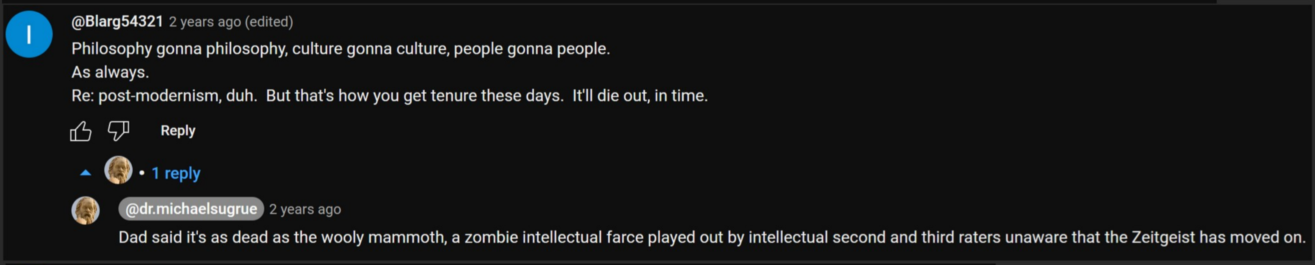
Dad doesn't play well with others.


@WesternHog 3 years ago

You haven't, like, CONCLUDED concluded, have you? You got more to put out, right?

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

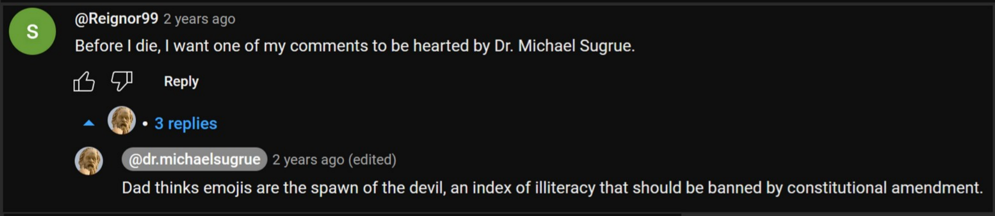
My Dad is ill and will not be recording further lectures. There are still a few more lectures from the 1990s floating around but these 57 are all we have.


@Blarg54321 2 years ago (edited)

Philosophy gonna philosophy, culture gonna culture, people gonna people.
As always.
Re: post-modernism, duh. But that's how you get tenure these days. It'll die out, in time.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

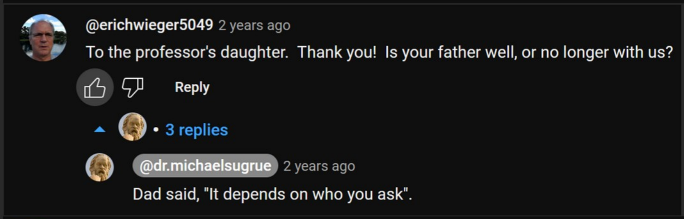
Dad said it's as dead as the wooly mammoth, a zombie intellectual farce played out by intellectual second and third raters unaware that the Zeitgeist has moved on.


@Reignor99 2 years ago

Before I die, I want one of my comments to be hearted by Dr. Michael Sugrue.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

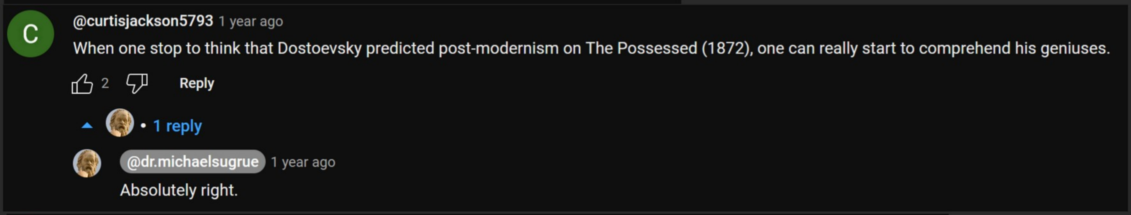
Dad thinks emojis are the spawn of the devil, an index of illiteracy that should be banned by constitutional amendment.


@erichwieger5049 2 years ago

To the professor's daughter. Thank you! Is your father well, or no longer with us?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

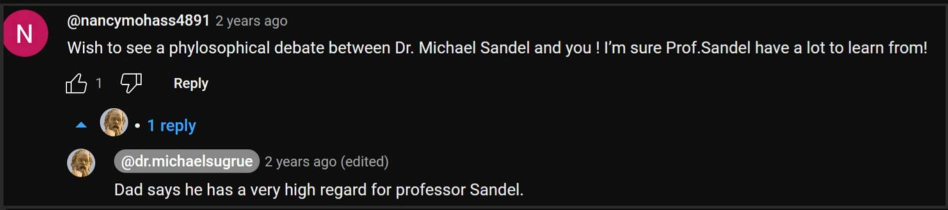
Dad said, "It depends on who you ask".


@curtisjackson5793 1 year ago

When one stop to think that Dostoevsky predicted post-modernism on The Possessed (1872), one can really start to comprehend his geniuses.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

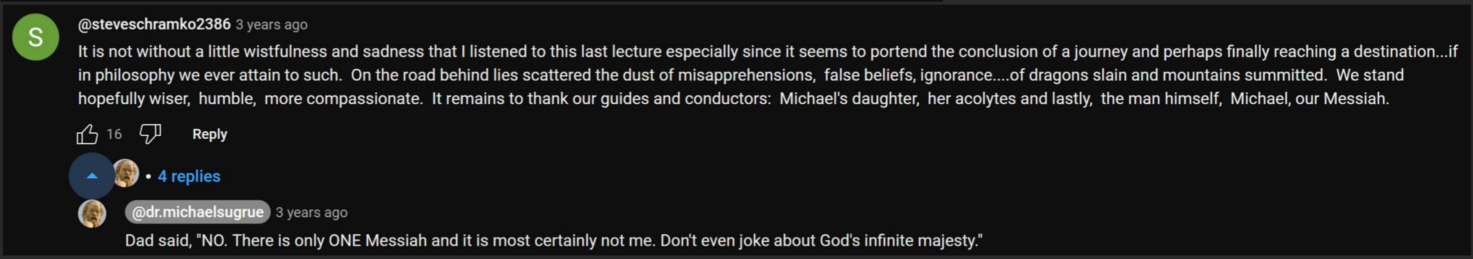
Absolutely right.


@nancymohass4891 2 years ago

Wish to see a phylosophical debate between Dr. Michael Sandel and you ! I'm sure Prof.Sandel have a lot to learn from!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad says he has a very high regard for professor Sandel.

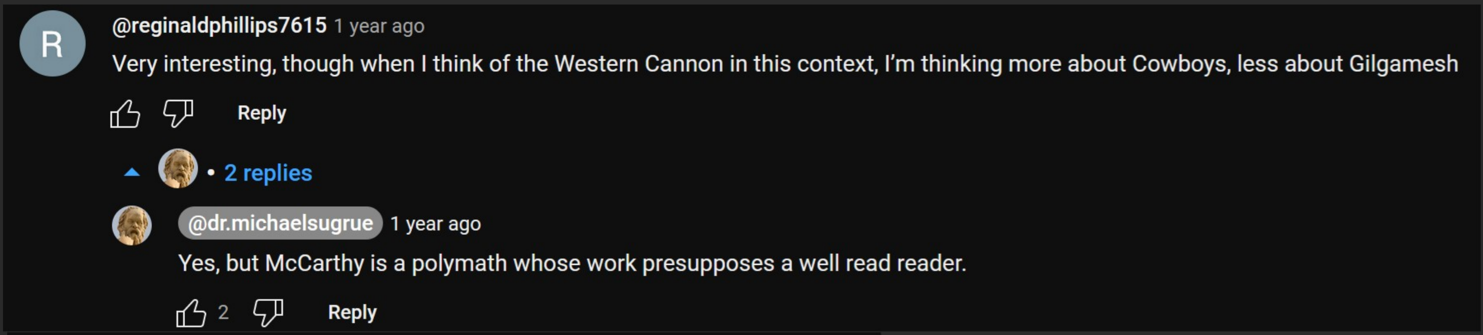

@steveschramko2386 3 years ago

It is not without a little wistfulness and sadness that I listened to this last lecture especially since it seems to portend the conclusion of a journey and perhaps finally reaching a destination...if in philosophy we ever attain to such. On the road behind lies scattered the dust of misapprehensions, false beliefs, ignorance....of dragons slain and mountains summitted. We stand hopefully wiser, humble, more compassionate. It remains to thank our guides and conductors: Michael's daughter, her acolytes and lastly, the man himself, Michael, our Messiah.

@dr.michaelsugrue 3 years ago

Dad said, "NO. There is only ONE Messiah and it is most certainly not me. Don't even joke about God's infinite majesty."

Blood Meridian: Bibliotheca Webinar

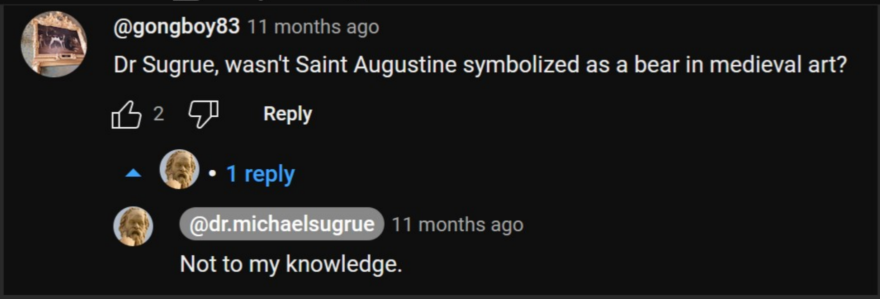


@reginaldphillips7615 1 year ago

Very interesting, though when I think of the Western Cannon in this context, I'm thinking more about Cowboys, less about Gilgamesh

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes, but McCarthy is a polymath whose work presupposes a well read reader.



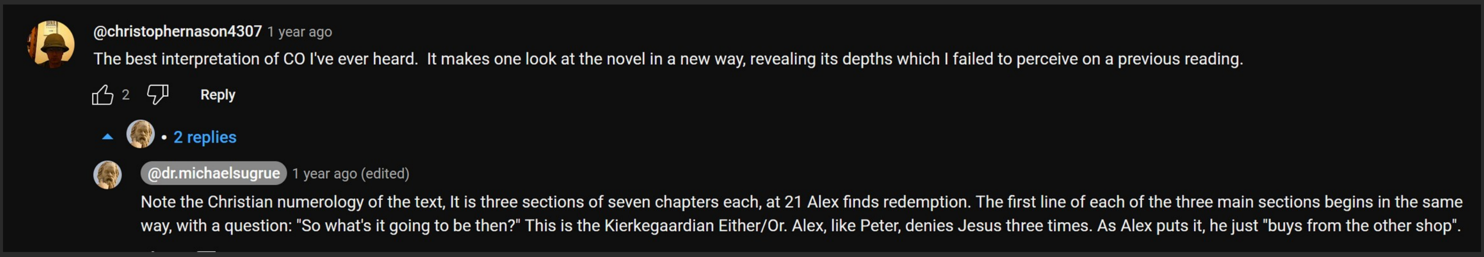
@gongboy83 11 months ago

Dr Sugrue, wasn't Saint Augustine symbolized as a bear in medieval art?

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Not to my knowledge.

A Clockwork Orange: Bibliotheca Webinar



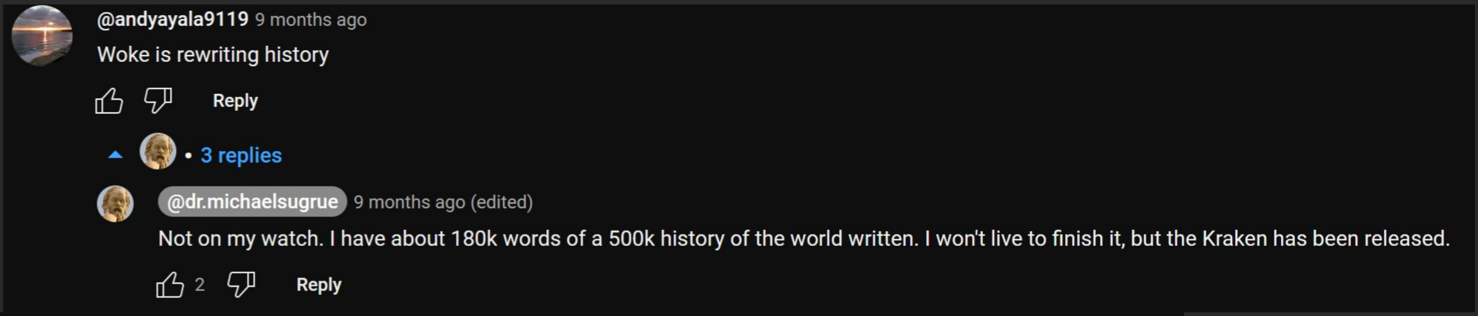
@christophernason4307 1 year ago

The best interpretation of CO I've ever heard. It makes one look at the novel in a new way, revealing its depths which I failed to perceive on a previous reading.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Note the Christian numerology of the text, It is three sections of seven chapters each, at 21 Alex finds redemption. The first line of each of the three main sections begins in the same way, with a question: "So what's it going to be then?" This is the Kierkegaardian Either/Or. Alex, like Peter, denies Jesus three times. As Alex puts it, he just "buys from the other shop".

1984 by George Orwell: Bibliotheca Webinar

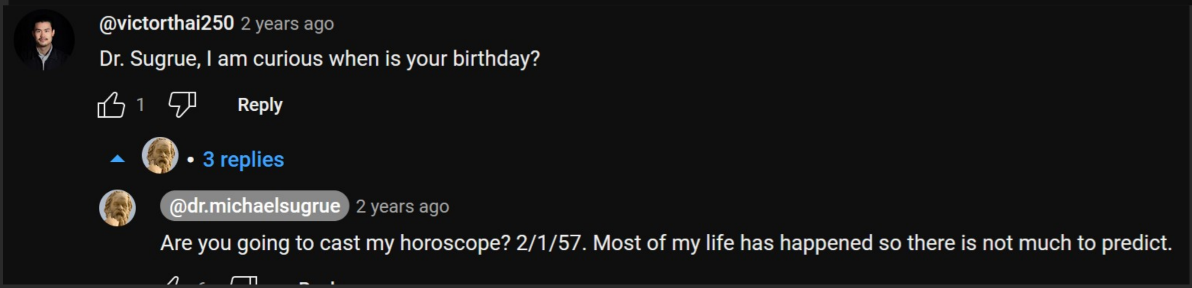


@andyayala9119 9 months ago

Woke is rewriting history

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)

Not on my watch. I have about 180k words of a 500k history of the world written. I won't live to finish it, but the Kraken has been released.



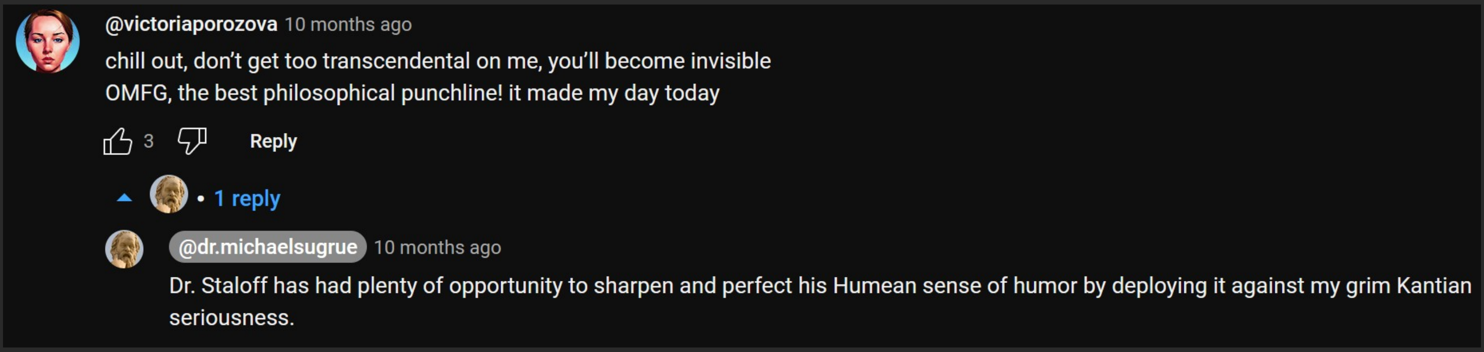
@victorthai250 2 years ago

Dr. Sugrue, I am curious when is your birthday?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Are you going to cast my horoscope? 2/1/57. Most of my life has happened so there is not much to predict.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Aristotle's Metaphysical Views



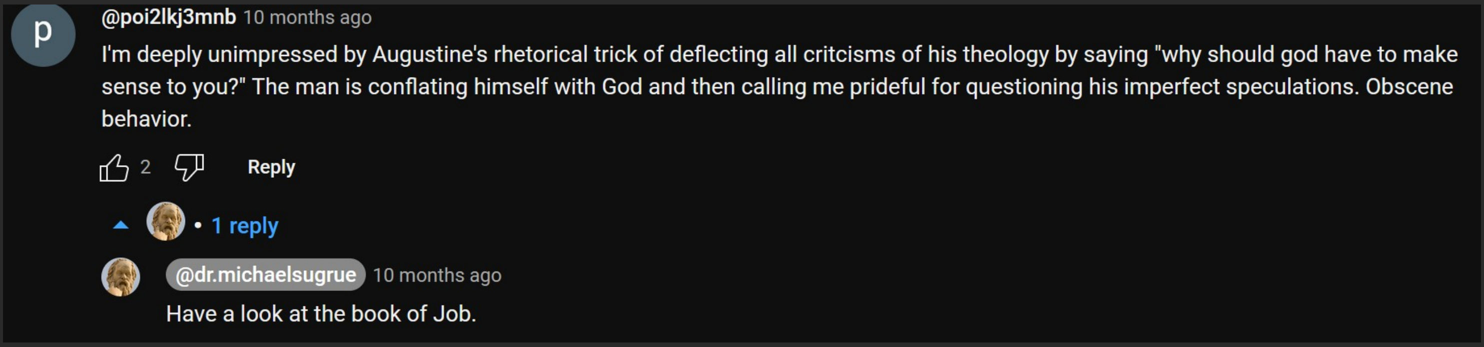
@victoriaporozova 10 months ago

chill out, don’t get too transcendental on me, you’ll become invisible
OMFG, the best philosophical punchline! it made my day today

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Dr. Staloff has had plenty of opportunity to sharpen and perfect his Humean sense of humor by deploying it against my grim Kantian seriousness.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Augustine's City of God_



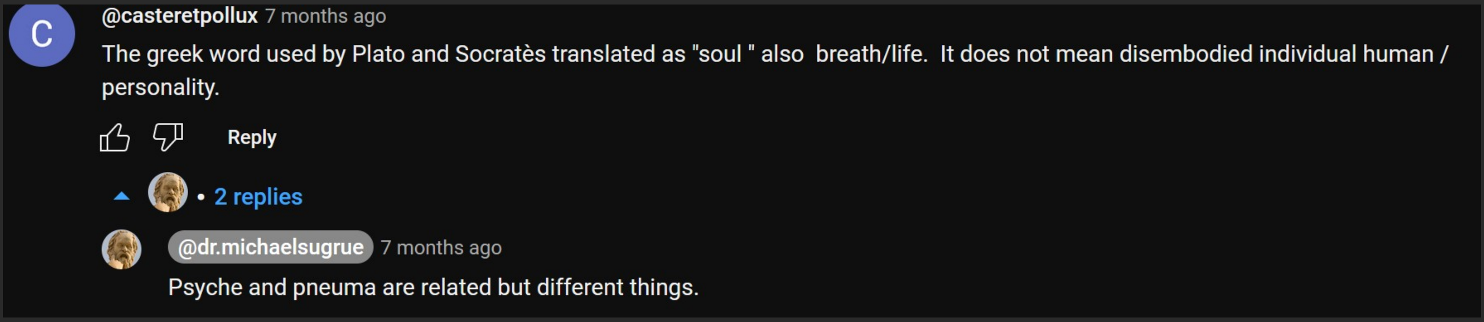
@poi2lkj3mnb 10 months ago

I'm deeply unimpressed by Augustine's rhetorical trick of deflecting all critcisms of his theology by saying "why should god have to make sense to you?" The man is conflating himself with God and then calling me prideful for questioning his imperfect speculations. Obscene behavior.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Have a look at the book of Job.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Descartes Epistemology



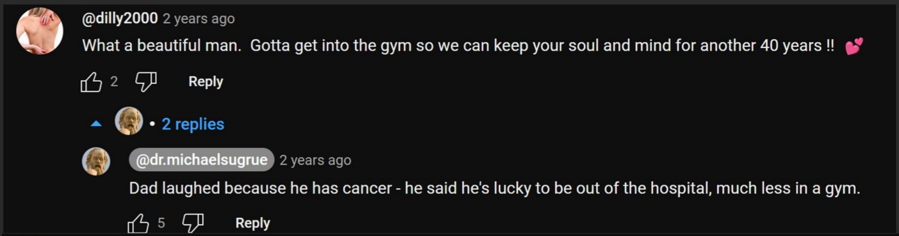
@casteretpollux 7 months ago

The greek word used by Plato and Socratès translated as "soul " also breath/life. It does not mean disembodied individual human / personality.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Psyche and pneuma are related but different things.

Marcus Aurelius' Meditations: Bibliotheca Webinar

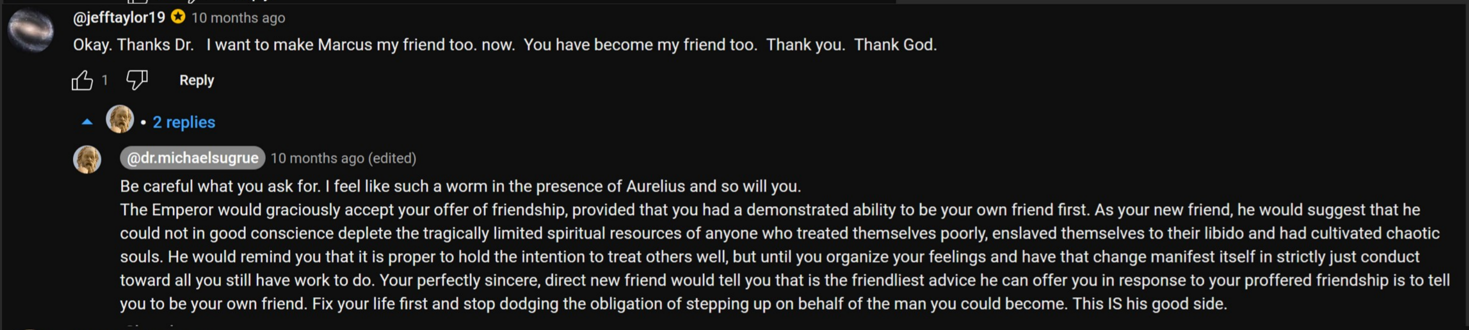


@dilly2000 2 years ago

What a beautiful man. Gotta get into the gym so we can keep your soul and mind for another 40 years !! 💕

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad laughed because he has cancer - he said he's lucky to be out of the hospital, much less in a gym.



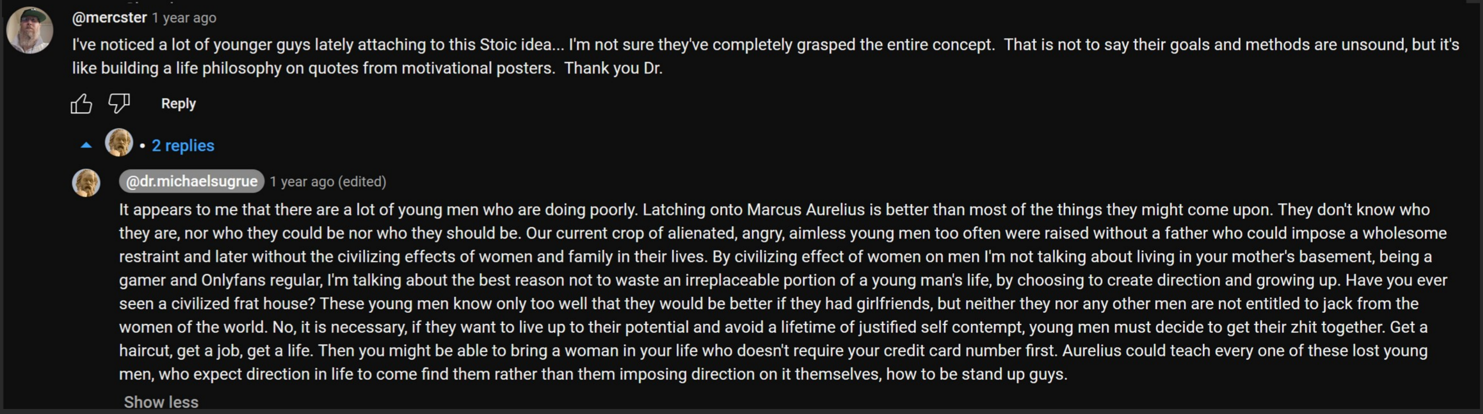
@jefftaylor19 10 months ago

Okay. Thanks Dr.   I want to make Marcus my friend too. now. You have become my friend too. Thank you. Thank God.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

Be careful what you ask for. I feel like such a worm in the presence of Aurelius and so will you.

The Emperor would graciously accept your offer of friendship, provided that you had a demonstrated ability to be your own friend first. As your new friend, he would suggest that he could not in good conscience deplete the tragically limited spiritual resources of anyone who treated themselves poorly, enslaved themselves to their libido and had cultivated chaotic souls. He would remind you that it is proper to hold the intention to treat others well, but until you organize your feelings and have that change manifest itself in strictly just conduct toward all you still have work to do. Your perfectly sincere, direct new friend would tell you that is the friendliest advice he can offer you in response to your proffered friendship is to tell you to be your own friend. Fix your life first and stop dodging the obligation of stepping up on behalf of the man you could become. This IS his good side.



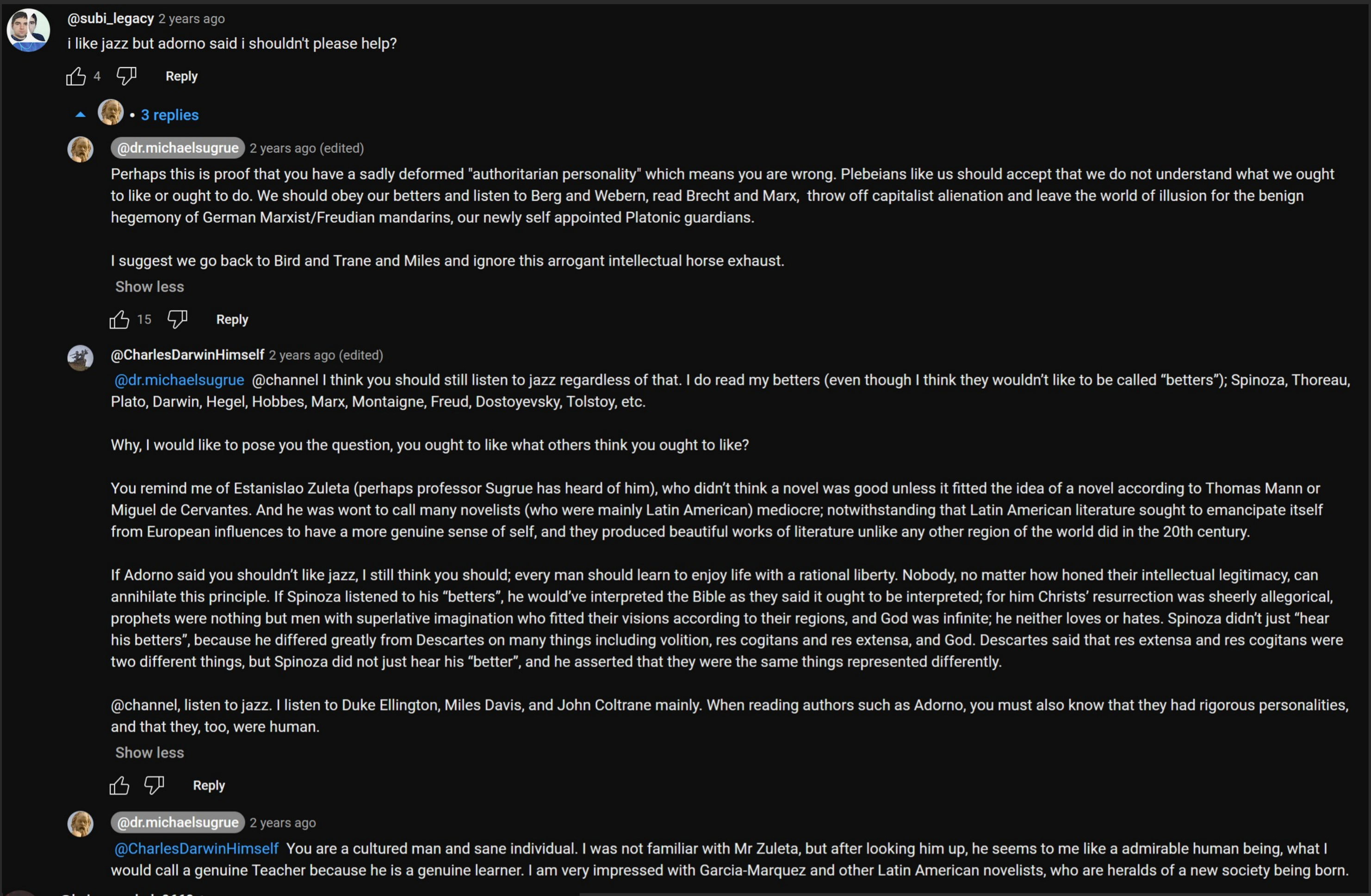
@mercster 1 year ago

I've noticed a lot of younger guys lately attaching to this Stoic idea... I'm not sure they've completely grasped the entire concept. That is not to say their goals and methods are unsound, but it's like building a life philosophy on quotes from motivational posters. Thank you Dr.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

It appears to me that there are a lot of young men who are doing poorly. Latching onto Marcus Aurelius is better than most of the things they might come upon. They don't know who they are, nor who they could be nor who they should be. Our current crop of alienated, angry, aimless young men too often were raised without a father who could impose a wholesome restraint and later without the civilizing effects of women and family in their lives. By civilizing effect of women on men I'm not talking about living in your mother's basement, being a gamer and Onlyfans regular, I'm talking about the best reason not to waste an irreplaceable portion of a young man's life, by choosing to create direction and growing up. Have you ever seen a civilized frat house? These young men know only too well that they would be better if they had girlfriends, but neither they nor any other men are not entitled to jack from the women of the world. No, it is necessary, if they want to live up to their potential and avoid a lifetime of justified self contempt, young men must decide to get their zhit together. Get a haircut, get a job, get a life. Then you might be able to bring a woman in your life who doesn't require your credit card number first. Aurelius could teach every one of these lost young men, who expect direction in life to come find them rather than them imposing direction on it themselves, how to be stand up guys.

History of the Peloponnesian War: Bibliotheca Webinar



@subi_legacy 2 years ago

i like jazz but adorno said i shouldn't please help?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Perhaps this is proof that you have a sadly deformed "authoritarian personality" which means you are wrong. Plebeians like us should accept that we do not understand what we ought to like or ought to do. We should obey our betters and listen to Berg and Webern, read Brecht and Marx, throw off capitalist alienation and leave the world of illusion for the benign hegemony of German Marxist/Freudian mandarins, our newly self appointed Platonic guardians.

I suggest we go back to Bird and Trane and Miles and ignore this arrogant intellectual horse exhaust.

@CharlesDarwinHimself 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue @channel I think you should still listen to jazz regardless of that. I do read my betters (even though I think they wouldn't like to be called "betters"); Spinoza, Thoreau, Plato, Darwin, Hegel, Hobbes, Marx, Montaigne, Freud, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, etc.

Why, I would like to pose you the question, you ought to like what others think you ought to like?

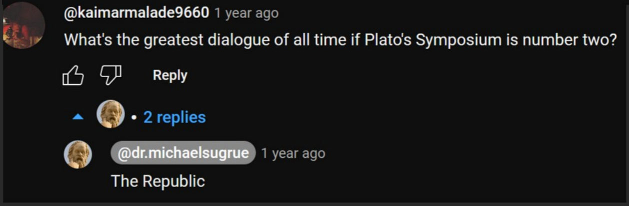
You remind me of Estanislao Zuleta (perhaps professor Sugrue has heard of him), who didn't think a novel was good unless it fitted the idea of a novel according to Thomas Mann or Miguel de Cervantes. And he was wont to call many novelists (who were mainly Latin American) mediocre; notwithstanding that Latin American literature sought to emancipate itself from European influences to have a more genuine sense of self, and they produced beautiful works of literature unlike any other region of the world did in the 20th century.

If Adorno said you shouldn't like jazz, I still think you should; every man should learn to enjoy life with a rational liberty. Nobody, no matter how honed their intellectual legitimacy, can annihilate this principle. If Spinoza listened to his "betters", he would've interpreted the Bible as they said it ought to be interpreted; for him Christs' resurrection was sheerly allegorical, prophets were nothing but men with superlative imagination who fitted their visions according to their regions, and God was infinite; he neither loves or hates. Spinoza didn't just "hear his betters", because he differed greatly from Descartes on many things including volition, res cogitans and res extensa, and God. Descartes said that res extensa and res cogitans were two different things, but Spinoza did not just hear his "better", and he asserted that they were the same things represented differently.

@channel, listen to jazz. I listen to Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, and John Coltrane mainly. When reading authors such as Adorno, you must also know that they had rigorous personalities, and that they, too, were human.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@CharlesDarwinHimself You are a cultured man and sane individual. I was not familiar with Mr Zuleta, but after looking him up, he seems to me like a admirable human being, what I would call a genuine Teacher because he is a genuine learner. I am very impressed with Garcia-Marquez and other Latin American novelists, who are heralds of a new society being born.

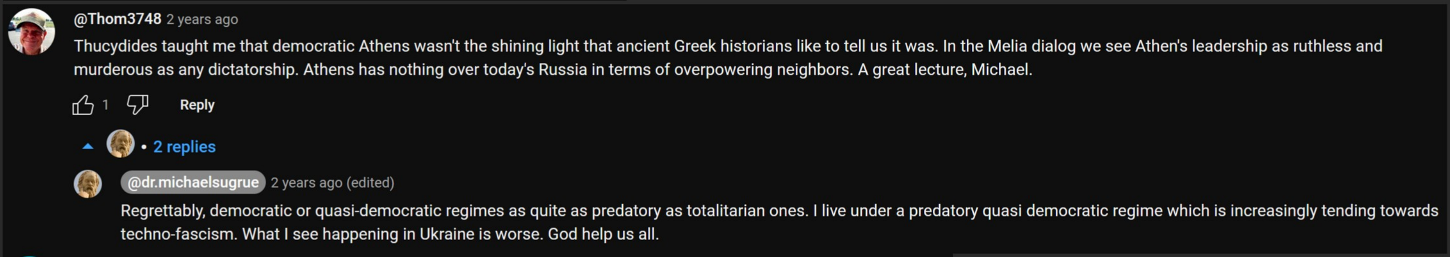


@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago

What's the greatest dialogue of all time if Plato's Symposium is number two?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The Republic

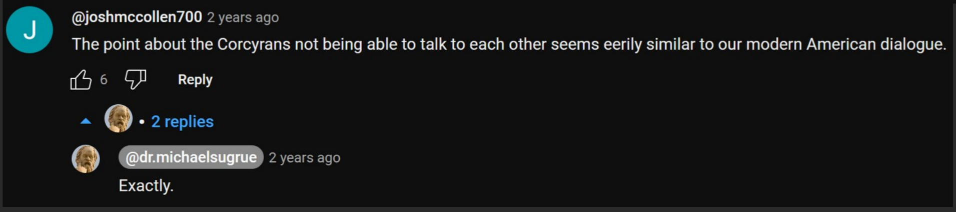


@Thom3748 2 years ago

Thucydides taught me that democratic Athens wasn't the shining light that ancient Greek historians like to tell us it was. In the Melia dialog we see Athen's leadership as ruthless and murderous as any dictatorship. Athens has nothing over today's Russia in terms of overpowering neighbors. A great lecture, Michael.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Regrettably, democratic or quasi-democratic regimes as quite as predatory as totalitarian ones. I live under a predatory quasi democratic regime which is increasingly tending towards techno-fascism. What I see happening in Ukraine is worse. God help us all.



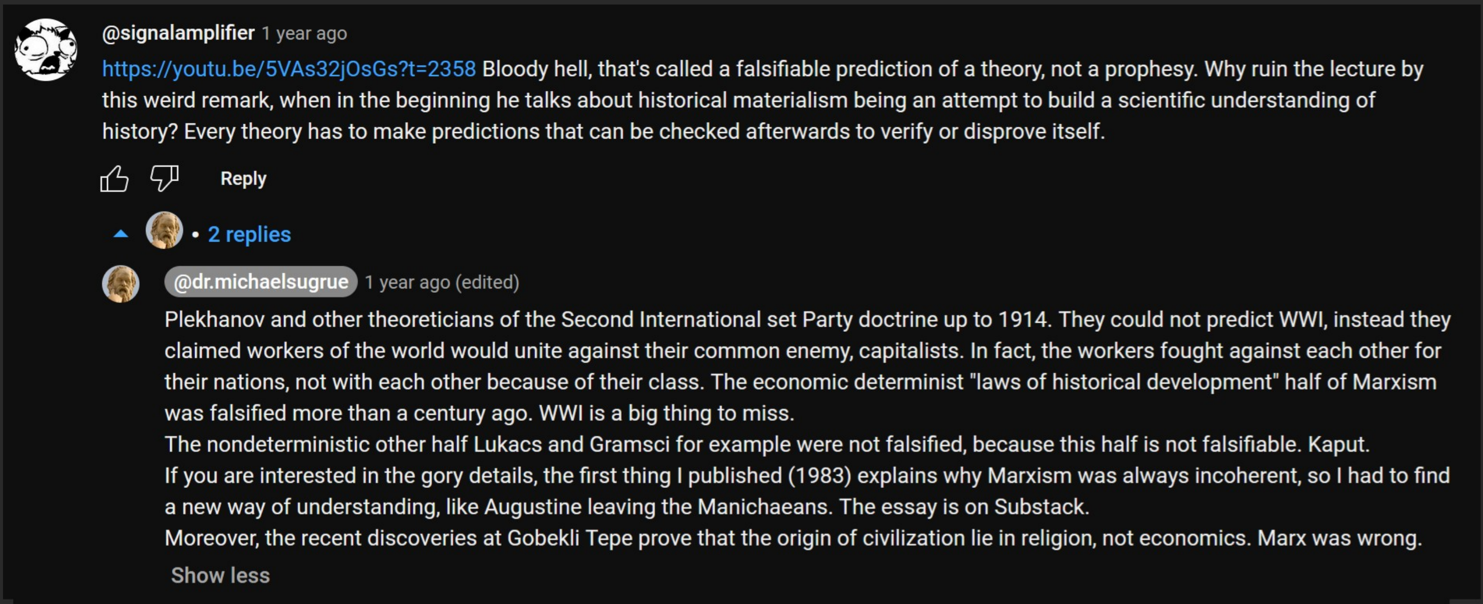
@joshmccollen700 2 years ago

The point about the Corcyrans not being able to talk to each other seems eerily similar to our modern American dialogue.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Exactly.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Marx's Historical Materialism

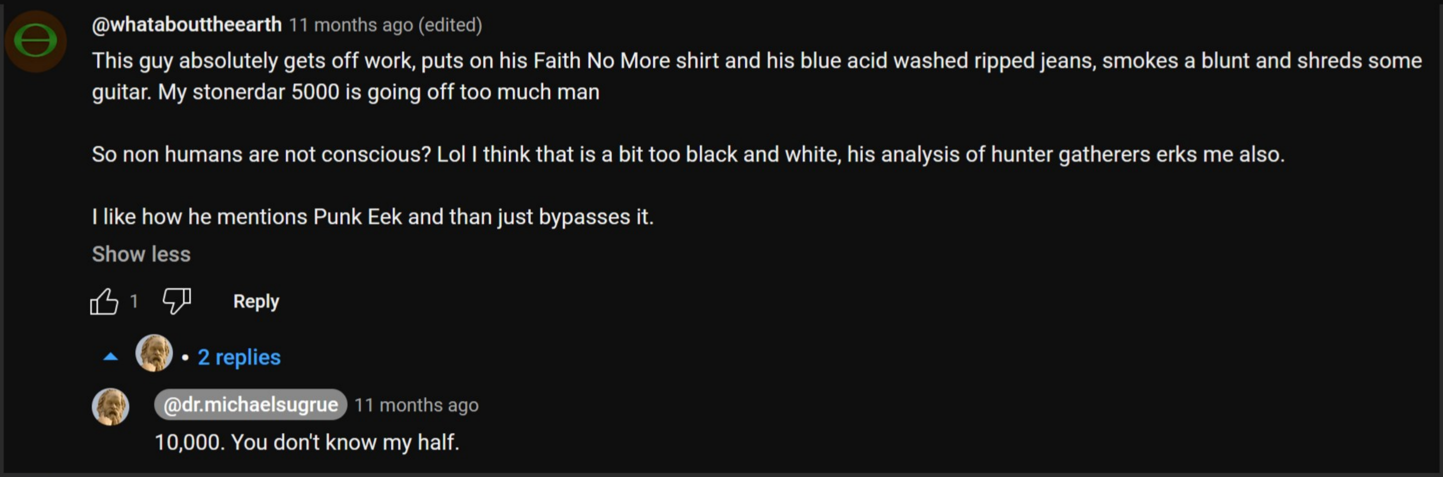


@signalamplifier 1 year ago

https://youtu.be/5VAs32jOsGs?t=2358 Bloody hell, that's called a falsifiable prediction of a theory, not a prophesy. Why ruin the lecture by this weird remark, when in the beginning he talks about historical materialism being an attempt to build a scientific understanding of history? Every theory has to make predictions that can be checked afterwards to verify or disprove itself.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Plekhanov and other theoreticians of the Second International set Party doctrine up to 1914. They could not predict WWI, instead they claimed workers of the world would unite against their common enemy, capitalists. In fact, the workers fought against each other for their nations, not with each other because of their class. The economic determinist "laws of historical development" half of Marxism was falsified more than a century ago. WWI is a big thing to miss.
The nondeterministic other half Lukacs and Gramsci for example were not falsified, because this half is not falsifiable. Kaput.
If you are interested in the gory details, the first thing I published (1983) explains why Marxism was always incoherent, so I had to find a new way of understanding, like Augustine leaving the Manichaeans. The essay is on Substack.
Moreover, the recent discoveries at Gobekli Tepe prove that the origin of civilization lie in religion, not economics. Marx was wrong.



@whatabouttheearth 11 months ago (edited)

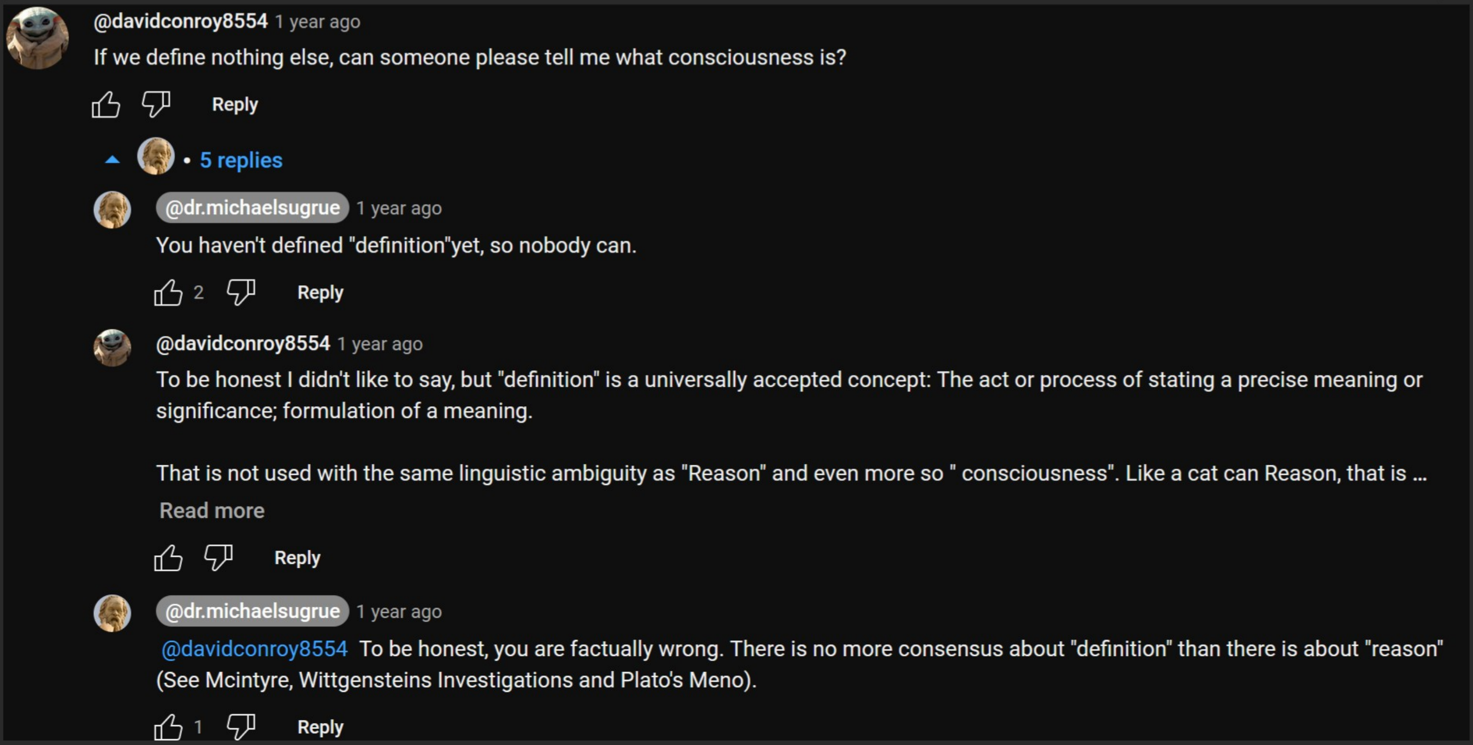
This guy absolutely gets off work, puts on his Faith No More shirt and his blue acid washed ripped jeans, smokes a blunt and shreds some guitar. My stonerdar 5000 is going off too much man

So non humans are not conscious? Lol I think that is a bit too black and white, his analysis of hunter gatherers erks me also.

I like how he mentions Punk Eek and than just bypasses it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

10,000. You don't know my half.



@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

If we define nothing else, can someone please tell me what consciousness is?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You haven't defined "definition"yet, so nobody can.

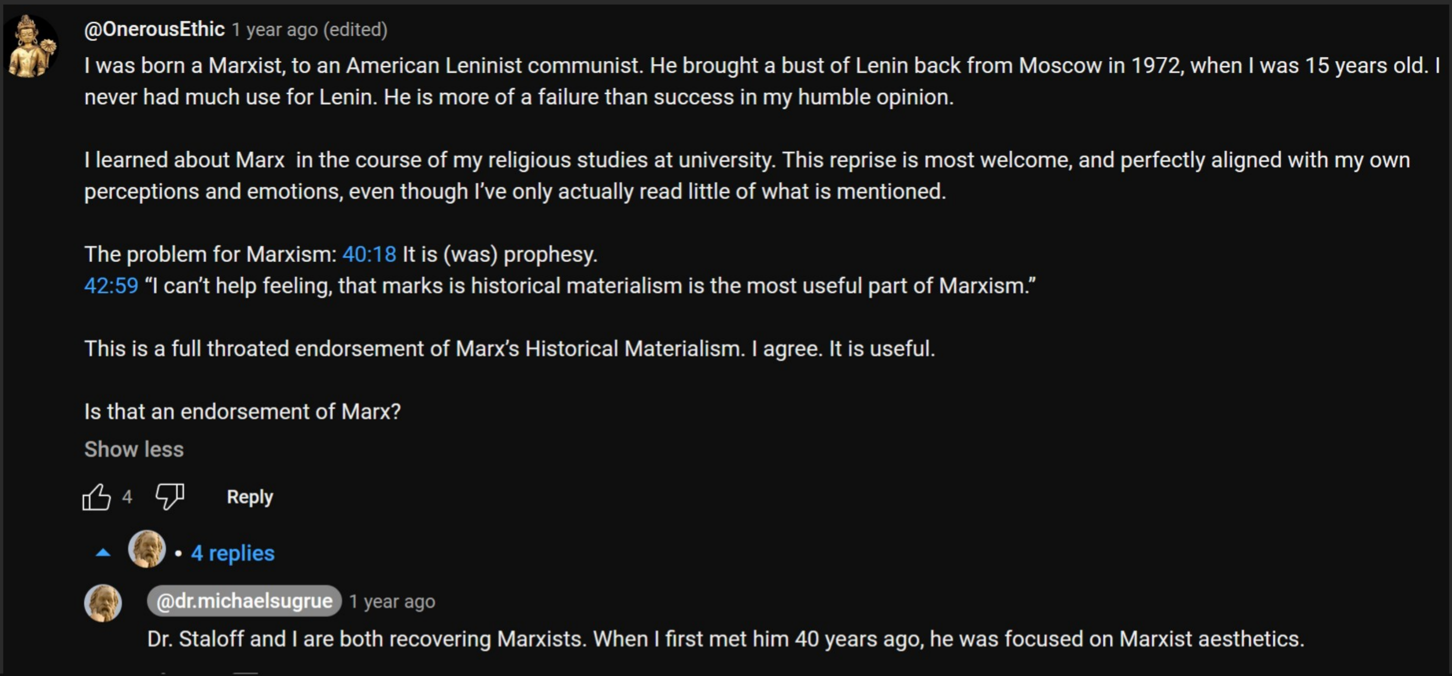
@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

To be honest I didn't like to say, but "definition" is a universally accepted concept: The act or process of stating a precise meaning or significance; formulation of a meaning.

That is not used with the same linguistic ambiguity as "Reason" and even more so " consciousness". Like a cat can Reason, that is ...

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@davidconroy8554 To be honest, you are factually wrong. There is no more consensus about "definition" than there is about "reason" (See Mcintyre, Wittgensteins Investigations and Plato's Meno).



@OnerousEthic 1 year ago (edited)

I was born a Marxist, to an American Leninist communist. He brought a bust of Lenin back from Moscow in 1972, when I was 15 years old. I never had much use for Lenin. He is more of a failure than success in my humble opinion.

I learned about Marx in the course of my religious studies at university. This reprise is most welcome, and perfectly aligned with my own perceptions and emotions, even though I've only actually read little of what is mentioned.

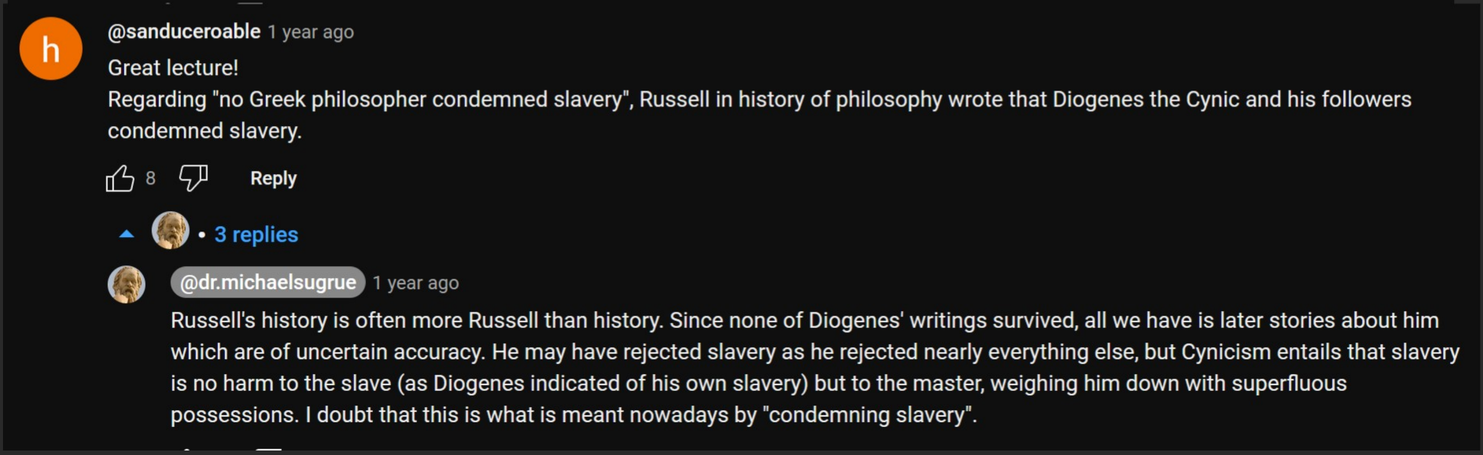
The problem for Marxism: 40:18 It is (was) prophesy.
42:59 "I can't help feeling, that marks is historical materialism is the most useful part of Marxism."

This is a full throated endorsement of Marx's Historical Materialism. I agree. It is useful.

Is that an endorsement of Marx?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Dr. Staloff and I are both recovering Marxists. When I first met him 40 years ago, he was focused on Marxist aesthetics.



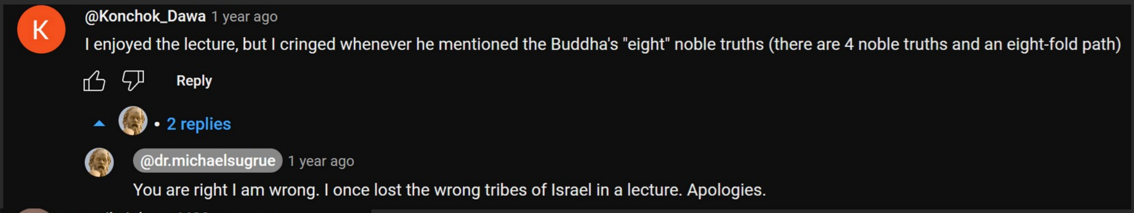
@sanduceroable 1 year ago

Great lecture!
Regarding "no Greek philosopher condemned slavery", Russell in history of philosophy wrote that Diogenes the Cynic and his followers condemned slavery.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Russell's history is often more Russell than history. Since none of Diogenes' writings survived, all we have is later stories about him which are of uncertain accuracy. He may have rejected slavery as he rejected nearly everything else, but Cynicism entails that slavery is no harm to the slave (as Diogenes indicated of his own slavery) but to the master, weighing him down with superfluous possessions. I doubt that this is what is meant nowadays by "condemning slavery".

Schopenhauer: The World as Will and Idea

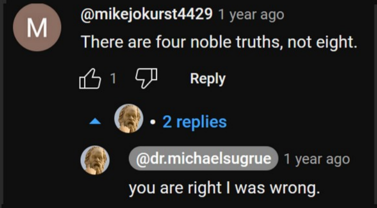


@Konchok_Dawa 1 year ago

I enjoyed the lecture, but I cringed whenever he mentioned the Buddha's "eight" noble truths (there are 4 noble truths and an eight-fold path)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are right I am wrong. I once lost the wrong tribes of Israel in a lecture. Apologies.

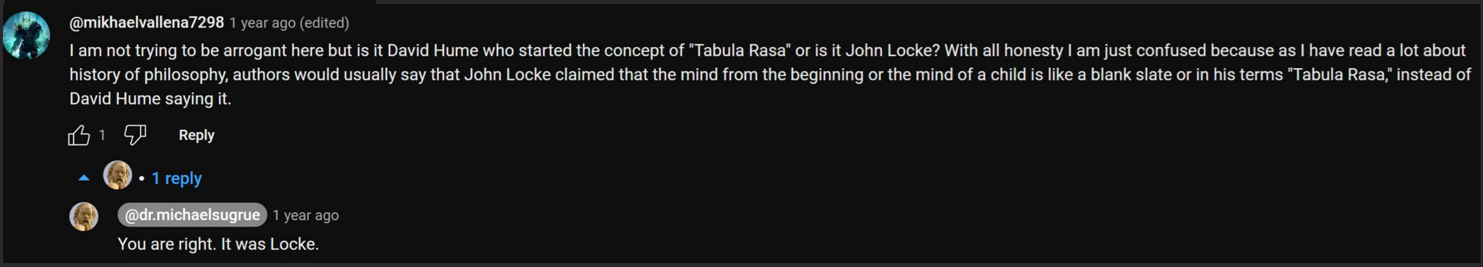


@mikejokurst4429 1 year ago

There are four noble truths, not eight.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

you are right I was wrong.



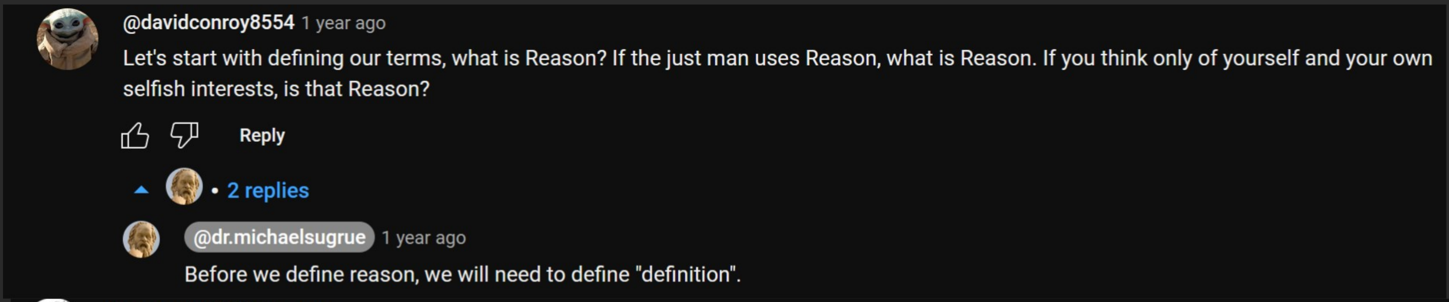
@mikhaelvallena7298 1 year ago (edited)

I am not trying to be arrogant here but is it David Hume who started the concept of "Tabula Rasa" or is it John Locke? With all honesty I am just confused because as I have read a lot about history of philosophy, authors would usually say that John Locke claimed that the mind from the beginning or the mind of a child is like a blank slate or in his terms "Tabula Rasa," instead of David Hume saying it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are right. It was Locke.

Dr. Darren Staloff, James' Pragmatism

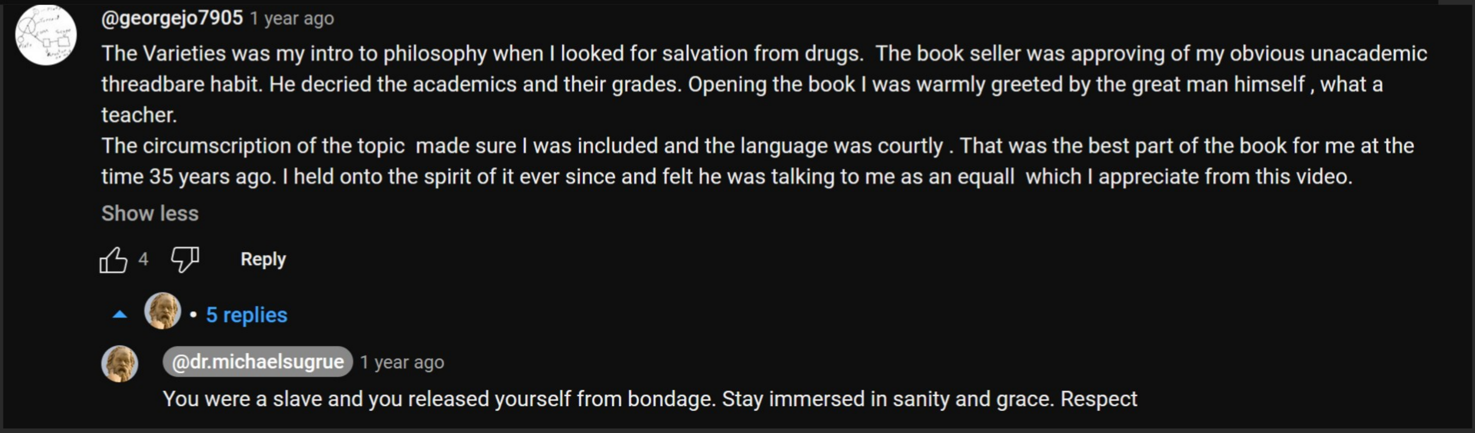


@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

Let's start with defining our terms, what is Reason? If the just man uses Reason, what is Reason. If you think only of yourself and your own selfish interests, is that Reason?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Before we define reason, we will need to define "definition".



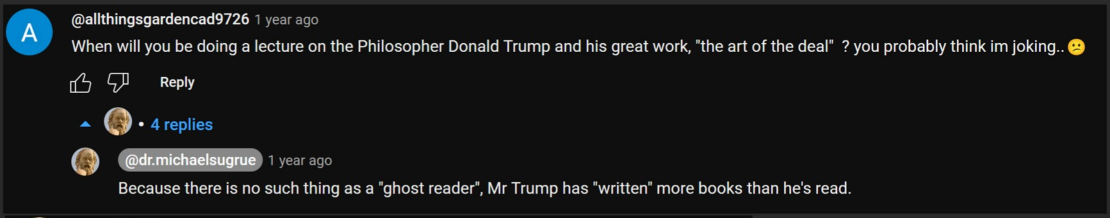
@georgejo7905 1 year ago

The Varieties was my intro to philosophy when I looked for salvation from drugs. The book seller was approving of my obvious unacademic threadbare habit. He decried the academics and their grades. Opening the book I was warmly greeted by the great man himself , what a teacher.
The circumscription of the topic made sure I was included and the language was courtly . That was the best part of the book for me at the time 35 years ago. I held onto the spirit of it ever since and felt he was talking to me as an equall which I appreciate from this video.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You were a slave and you released yourself from bondage. Stay immersed in sanity and grace. Respect

Machiavelli

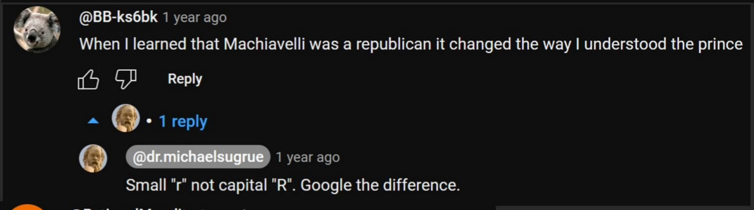


@allthingsgardencad9726 1 year ago

When will you be doing a lecture on the Philosopher Donald Trump and his great work, "the art of the deal" ? you probably think im joking.. 😕

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Because there is no such thing as a "ghost reader", Mr Trump has "written" more books than he's read.

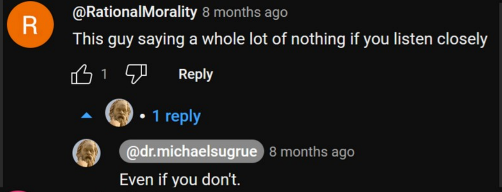


@BB-ks6bk 1 year ago

When I learned that Machiavelli was a republican it changed the way I understood the prince

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Small "r" not capital "R". Google the difference.

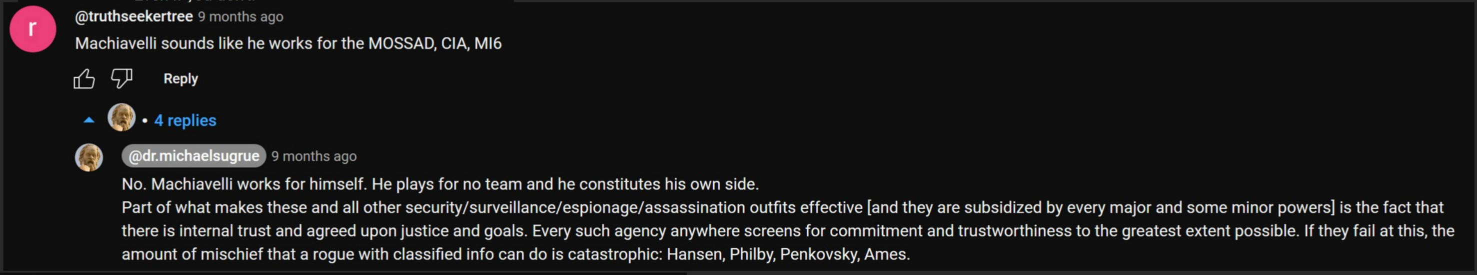


@RationalMorality 8 months ago

This guy saying a whole lot of nothing if you listen closely

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Even if you don't.



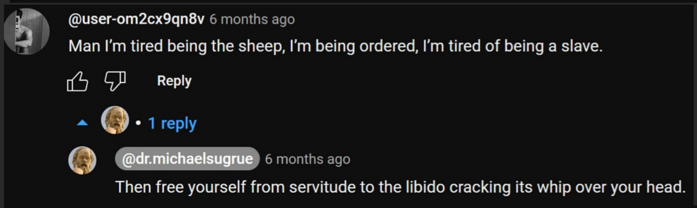
@truthseekertree 9 months ago

Machiavelli sounds like he works for the MOSSAD, CIA, MI6

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

No. Machiavelli works for himself. He plays for no team and he constitutes his own side.

Part of what makes these and all other security/surveillance/espionage/assassination outfits effective [and they are subsidized by every major and some minor powers] is the fact that there is internal trust and agreed upon justice and goals. Every such agency anywhere screens for commitment and trustworthiness to the greatest extent possible. If they fail at this, the amount of mischief that a rogue with classified info can do is catastrophic: Hansen, Philby, Penkovsky, Ames.

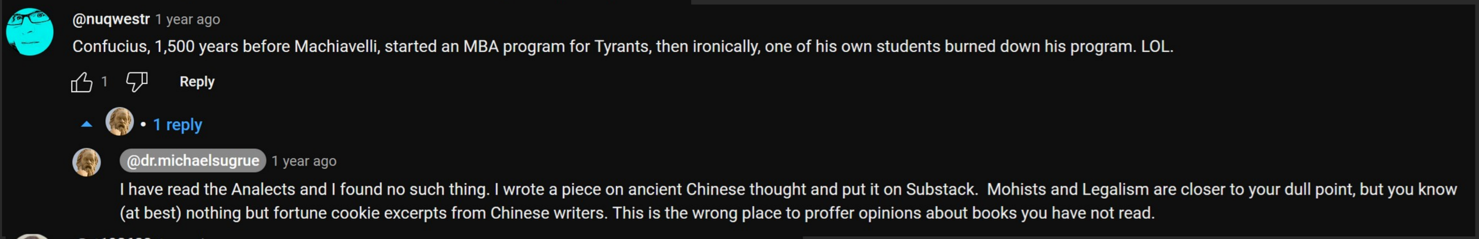


@user-om2cx9qn8v 6 months ago

Man I'm tired being the sheep, I'm being ordered, I'm tired of being a slave.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Then free yourself from servitude to the libido cracking its whip over your head.

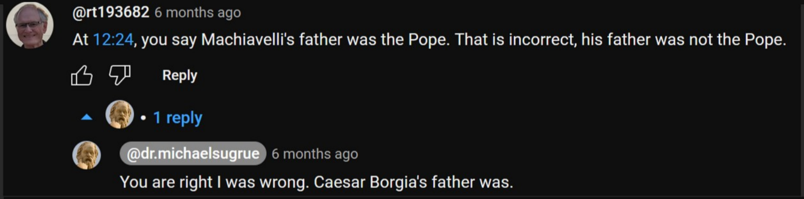


@nuqwestr 1 year ago

Confucius, 1,500 years before Machiavelli, started an MBA program for Tyrants, then ironically, one of his own students burned down his program. LOL.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have read the Analects and I found no such thing. I wrote a piece on ancient Chinese thought and put it on Substack. Mohists and Legalism are closer to your dull point, but you know (at best) nothing but fortune cookie excerpts from Chinese writers. This is the wrong place to proffer opinions about books you have not read.

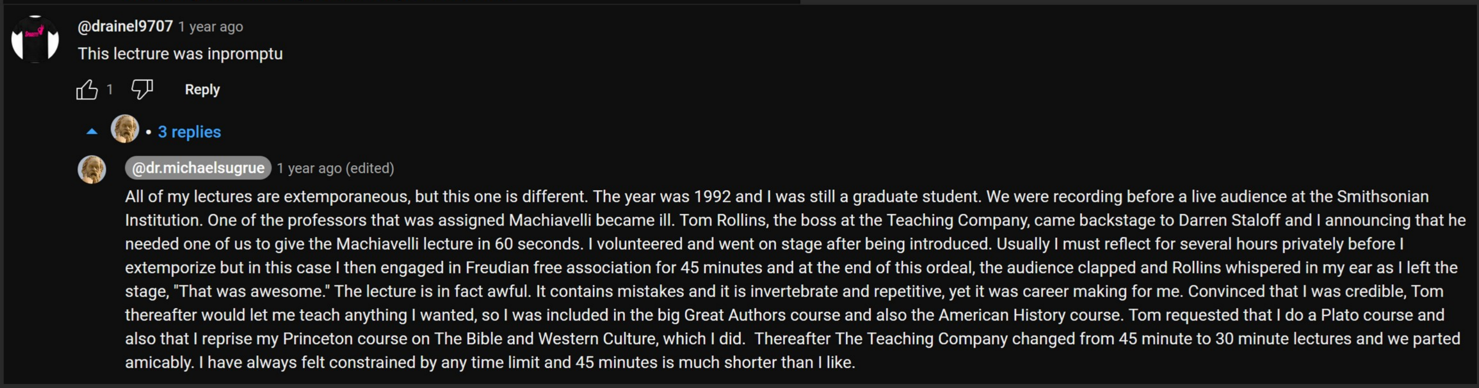


@rt193682 6 months ago

At 12:24, you say Machiavelli's father was the Pope. That is incorrect, his father was not the Pope.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

You are right I was wrong. Caesar Borgia's father was.

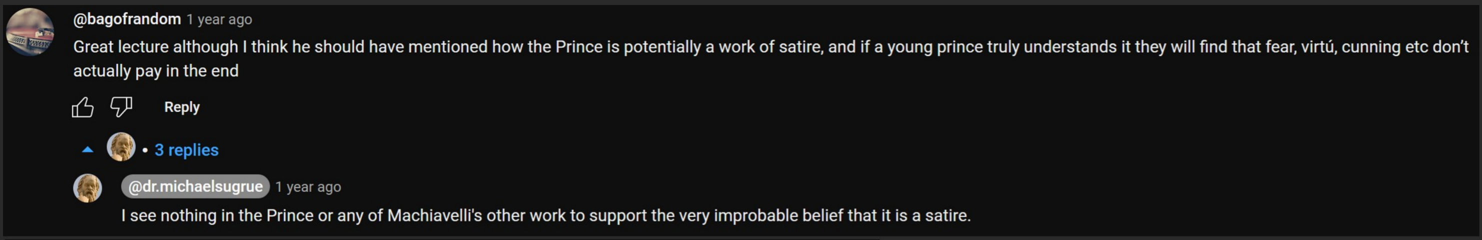


@drainel9707 1 year ago

This lectrure was inpromptu

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

All of my lectures are extemporaneous, but this one is different. The year was 1992 and I was still a graduate student. We were recording before a live audience at the Smithsonian Institution. One of the professors that was assigned Machiavelli became ill. Tom Rollins, the boss at the Teaching Company, came backstage to Darren Staloff and I announcing that he needed one of us to give the Machiavelli lecture in 60 seconds. I volunteered and went on stage after being introduced. Usually I must reflect for several hours privately before I extemporize but in this case I then engaged in Freudian free association for 45 minutes and at the end of this ordeal, the audience clapped and Rollins whispered in my ear as I left the stage, "That was awesome." The lecture is in fact awful. It contains mistakes and it is invertebrate and repetitive, yet it was career making for me. Convinced that I was credible, Tom thereafter would let me teach anything I wanted, so I was included in the big Great Authors course and also the American History course. Tom requested that I do a Plato course and also that I reprise my Princeton course on The Bible and Western Culture, which I did. Thereafter The Teaching Company changed from 45 minute to 30 minute lectures and we parted amicably. I have always felt constrained by any time limit and 45 minutes is much shorter than I like.

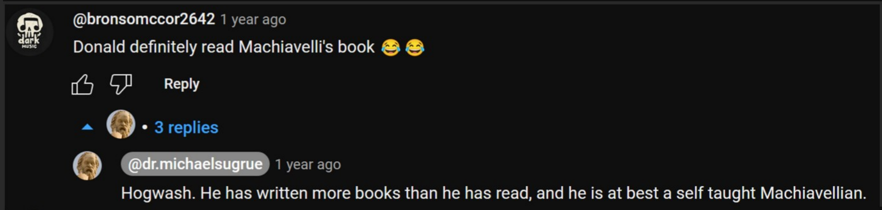


@bagofrandom 1 year ago

Great lecture although I think he should have mentioned how the Prince is potentially a work of satire, and if a young prince truly understands it they will find that fear, virtú, cunning etc don't actually pay in the end

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I see nothing in the Prince or any of Machiavelli's other work to support the very improbable belief that it is a satire.

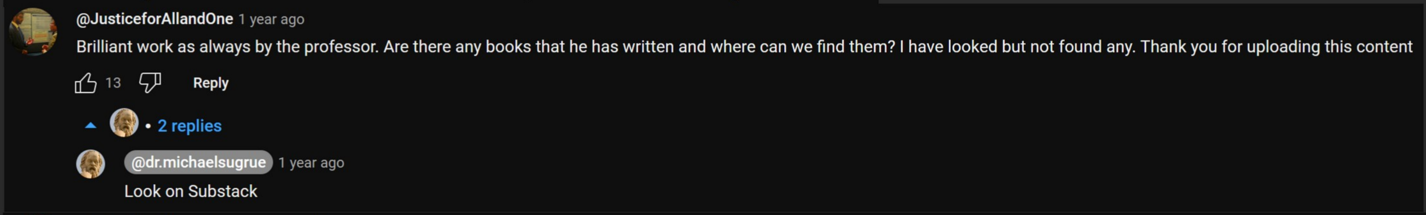


@bronsomccor2642 1 year ago

Donald definitely read Machiavelli's book 😂 😂

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Hogwash. He has written more books than he has read, and he is at best a self taught Machiavellian.

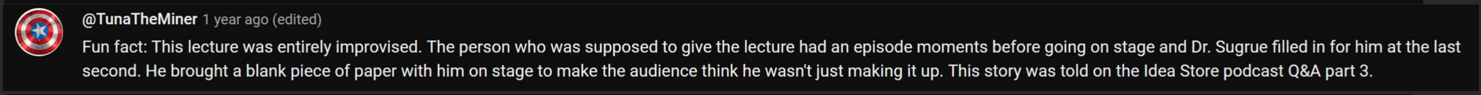


@JusticeforAllandOne 1 year ago

Brilliant work as always by the professor. Are there any books that he has written and where can we find them? I have looked but not found any. Thank you for uploading this content

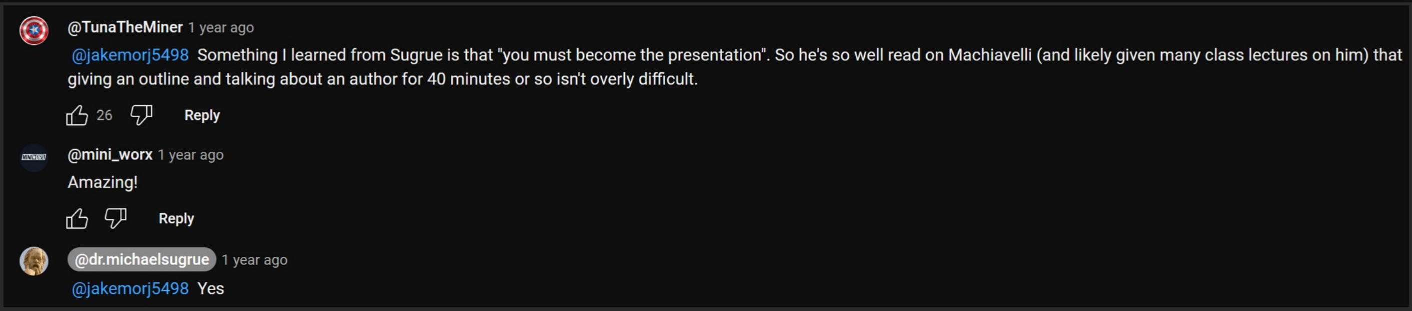
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Look on Substack



@TunaTheMiner 1 year ago (edited)

Fun fact: This lecture was entirely improvised. The person who was supposed to give the lecture had an episode moments before going on stage and Dr. Sugrue filled in for him at the last second. He brought a blank piece of paper with him on stage to make the audience think he wasn't just making it up. This story was told on the Idea Store podcast Q&A part 3.



@TunaTheMiner 1 year ago

@jakemorj5498 Something I learned from Sugrue is that "you must become the presentation". So he's so well read on Machiavelli (and likely given many class lectures on him) that giving an outline and talking about an author for 40 minutes or so isn't overly difficult.

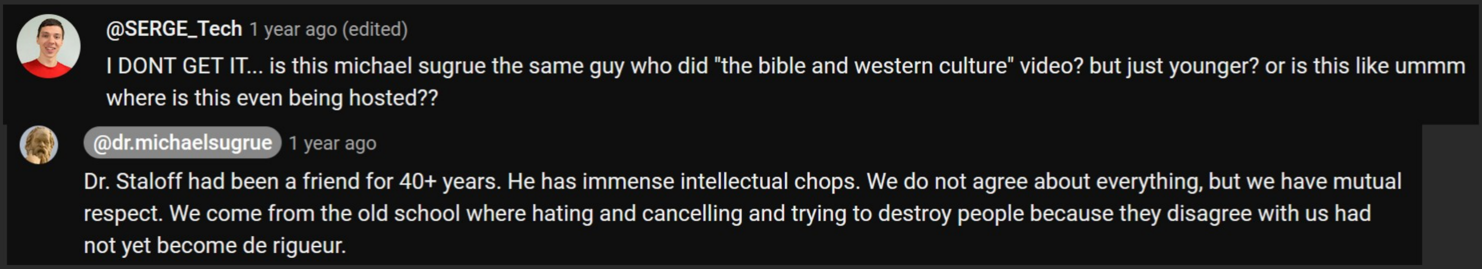
@mini_worx 1 year ago

Amazing!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@jakemorj5498 Yes

Dr. Darren Staloff, A. J. Ayer's Language, Truth, and Logic



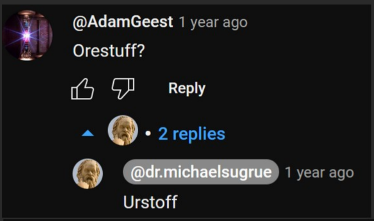
@SERGE_Tech 1 year ago (edited)

I DONT GET IT... is this michael sugrue the same guy who did "the bible and western culture" video? but just younger? or is this like ummm where is this even being hosted??

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

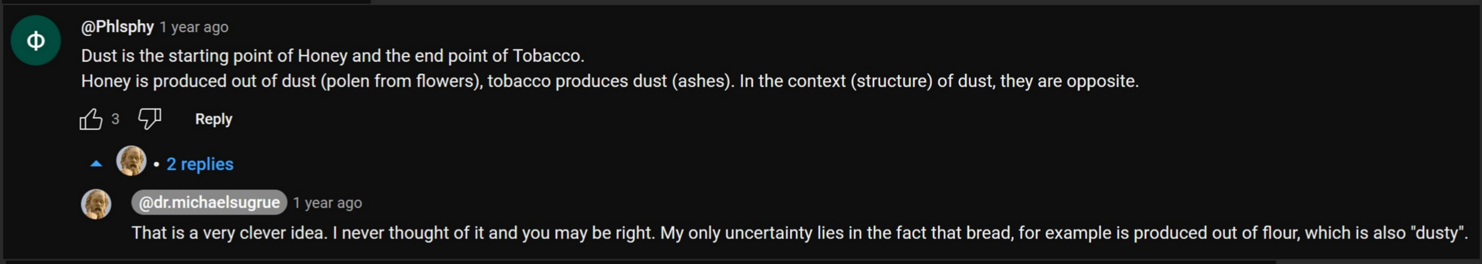
Dr. Staloff had been a friend for 40+ years. He has immense intellectual chops. We do not agree about everything, but we have mutual respect. We come from the old school where hating and cancelling and trying to destroy people because they disagree with us had not yet become de rigueur.

Levi-Strauss and Structuralism_



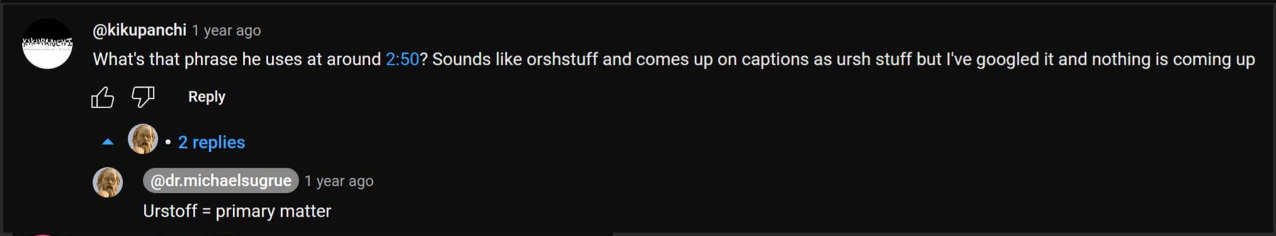
@AdamGeest 1 year ago
Orestuff?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Urstoff



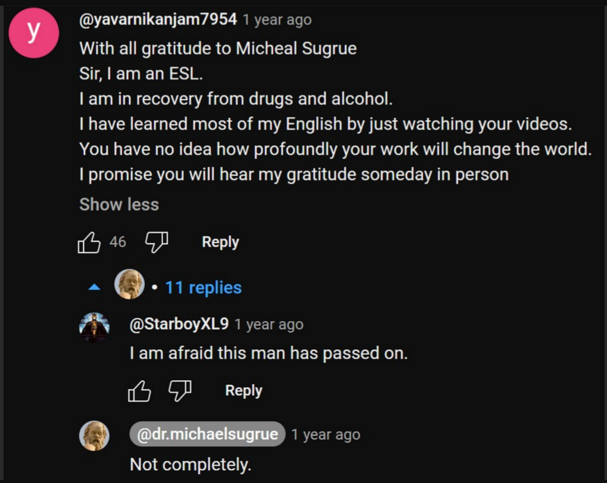
@Phlsphy 1 year ago
Dust is the starting point of Honey and the end point of Tobacco.
Honey is produced out of dust (polen from flowers), tobacco produces dust (ashes). In the context (structure) of dust, they are opposite.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
That is a very clever idea. I never thought of it and you may be right. My only uncertainty lies in the fact that bread, for example is produced out of flour, which is also "dusty".



@kikupanchi 1 year ago
What's that phrase he uses at around 2:50? Sounds like orshstuff and comes up on captions as ursh stuff but I've googled it and nothing is coming up

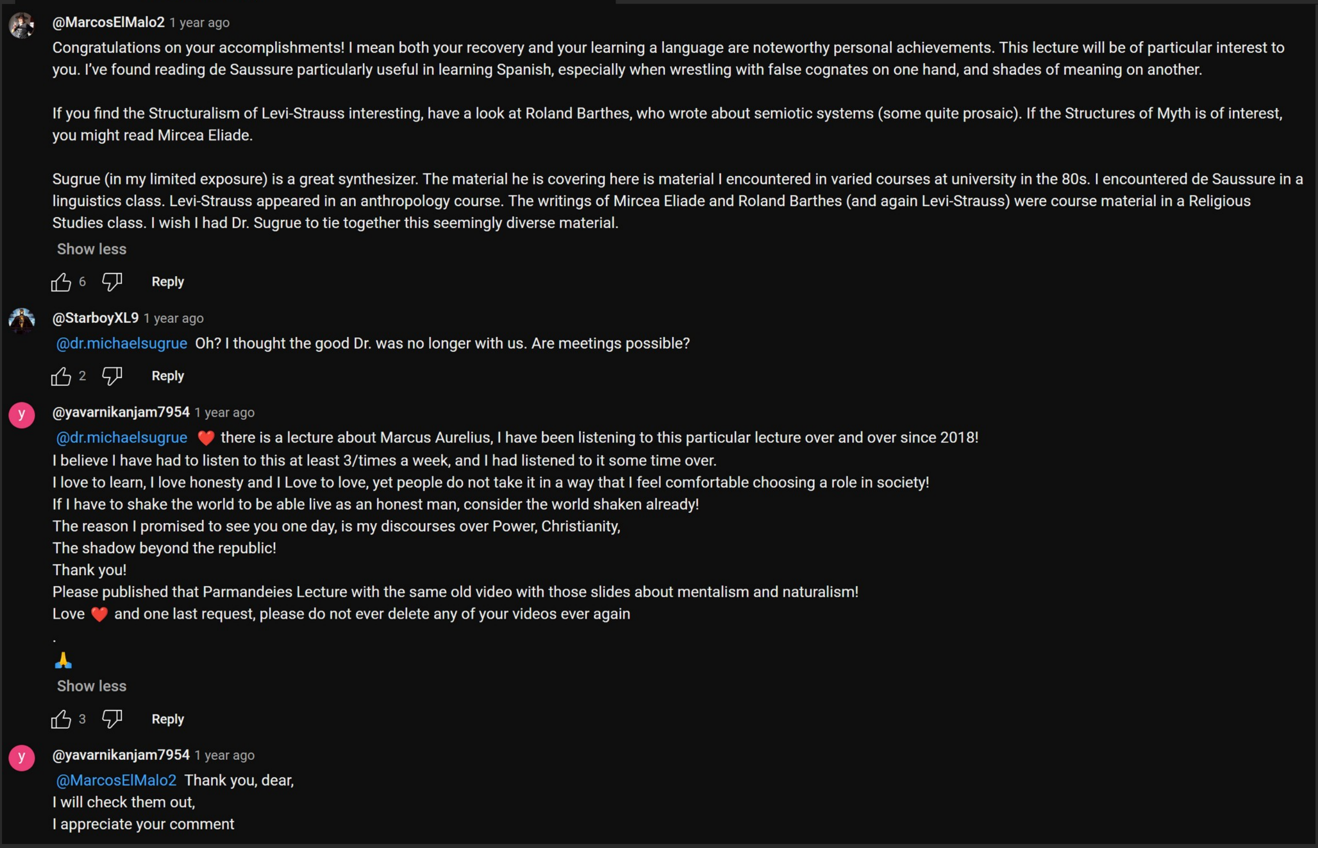
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Urstoff = primary matter



@yavarnikanjam7954 1 year ago
With all gratitude to Micheal Sugrue
Sir, I am an ESL.
I am in recovery from drugs and alcohol.
I have learned most of my English by just watching your videos.
You have no idea how profoundly your work will change the world.
I promise you will hear my gratitude someday in person

@StarboyXL9 1 year ago
I am afraid this man has passed on.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Not completely.



@MarcosElMalo2 1 year ago
Congratulations on your accomplishments! I mean both your recovery and your learning a language are noteworthy personal achievements. This lecture will be of particular interest to you. I've found reading de Saussure particularly useful in learning Spanish, especially when wrestling with false cognates on one hand, and shades of meaning on another.

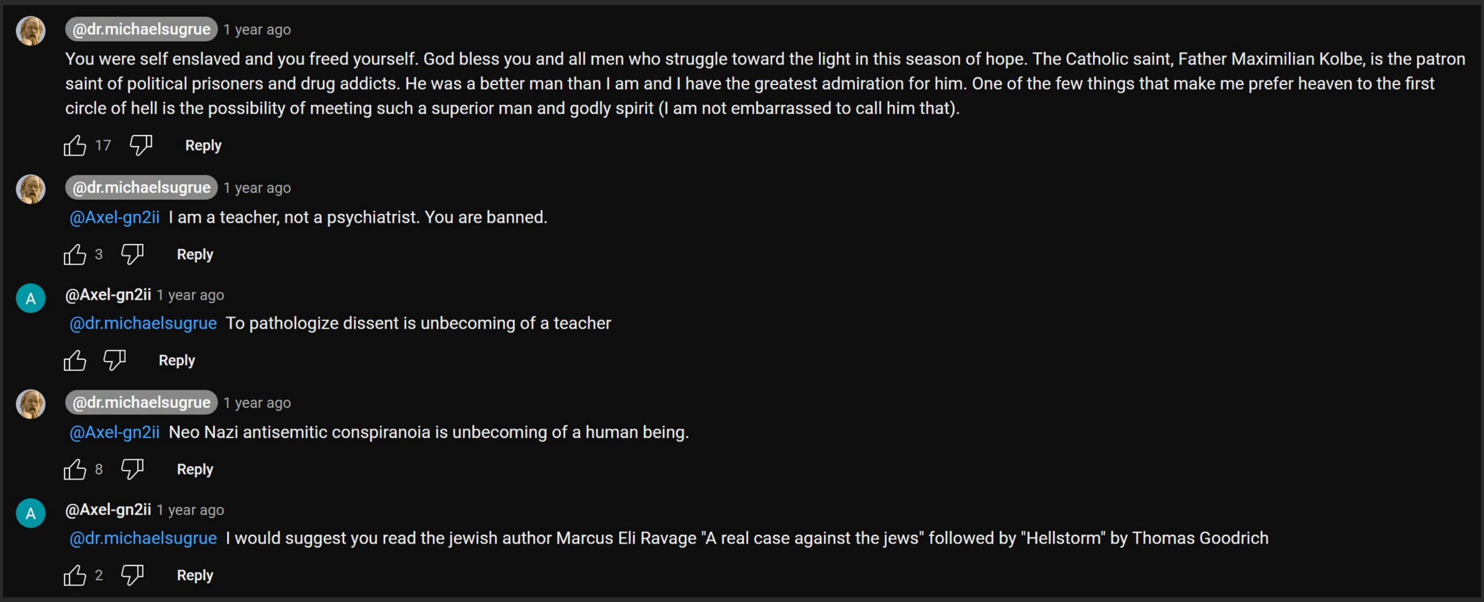
If you find the Structuralism of Levi-Strauss interesting, have a look at Roland Barthes, who wrote about semiotic systems (some quite prosaic). If the Structures of Myth is of interest, you might read Mircea Eliade.

Sugrue (in my limited exposure) is a great synthesizer. The material he is covering here is material I encountered in varied courses at university in the 80s. I encountered de Saussure in a linguistics class. Levi-Strauss appeared in an anthropology course. The writings of Mircea Eliade and Roland Barthes (and again Levi-Strauss) were course material in a Religious Studies class. I wish I had Dr. Sugrue to tie together this seemingly diverse material.

@StarboyXL9 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue Oh? I thought the good Dr. was no longer with us. Are meetings possible?

@yavarnikanjam7954 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue ❤️ there is a lecture about Marcus Aurelius, I have been listening to this particular lecture over and over since 2018!
I believe I have had to listen to this at least 3/times a week, and I had listened to it some time over.
I love to learn, I love honesty and I Love to love, yet people do not take it in a way that I feel comfortable choosing a role in society!
If I have to shake the world to be able live as an honest man, consider the world shaken already!
The reason I promised to see you one day, is my discourses over Power, Christianity,
The shadow beyond the republic!
Thank you!
Please published that Parmandeies Lecture with the same old video with those slides about mentalism and naturalism!
Love ❤️ and one last request, please do not ever delete any of your videos ever again
.
🙏

@yavarnikanjam7954 1 year ago
@MarcosElMalo2 Thank you, dear,
I will check them out,
I appreciate your comment



@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You were self enslaved and you freed yourself. God bless you and all men who struggle toward the light in this season of hope. The Catholic saint, Father Maximilian Kolbe, is the patron saint of political prisoners and drug addicts. He was a better man than I am and I have the greatest admiration for him. One of the few things that make me prefer heaven to the first circle of hell is the possibility of meeting such a superior man and godly spirit (I am not embarrassed to call him that).

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@Axel-gn2ii I am a teacher, not a psychiatrist. You are banned.

@Axel-gn2ii 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue To pathologize dissent is unbecoming of a teacher

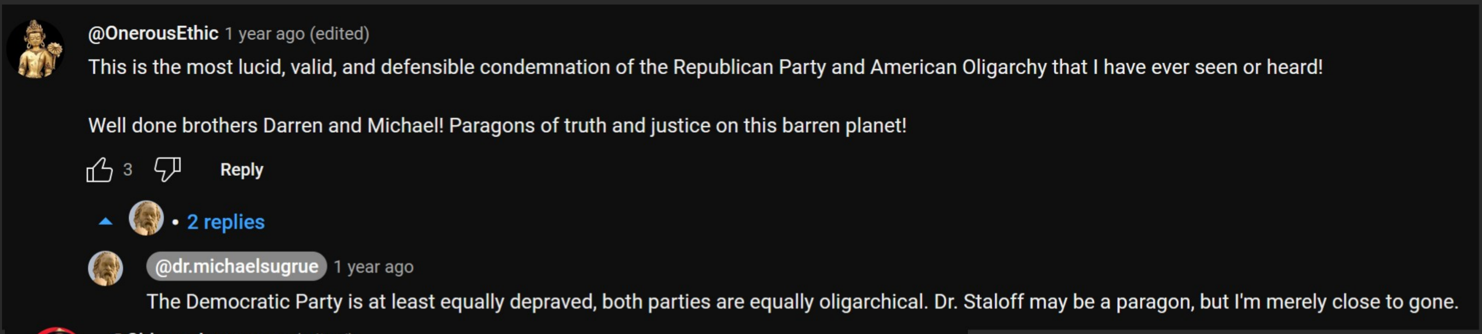
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@Axel-gn2ii Neo Nazi antisemitic conspiranoia is unbecoming of a human being.

@Axel-gn2ii 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I would suggest you read the jewish author Marcus Eli Ravage "A real case against the jews" followed by "Hellstorm" by Thomas Goodrich

Dr. Darren Staloff, Alvin Gouldner



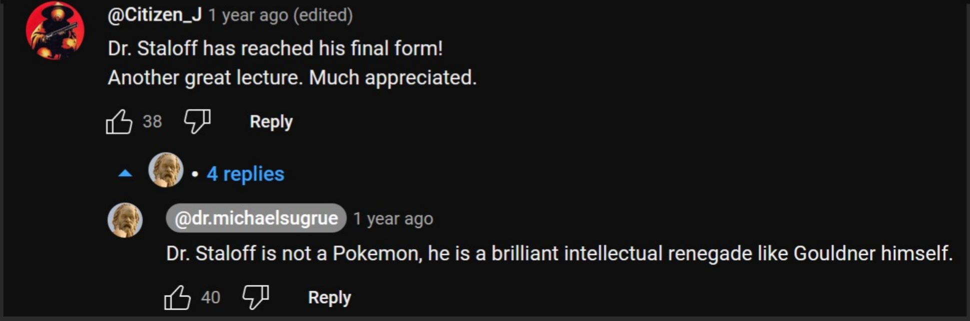
@OnerousEthic 1 year ago (edited)

This is the most lucid, valid, and defensible condemnation of the Republican Party and American Oligarchy that I have ever seen or heard!

Well done brothers Darren and Michael! Paragons of truth and justice on this barren planet!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The Democratic Party is at least equally depraved, both parties are equally oligarchical. Dr. Staloff may be a paragon, but I'm merely close to gone.



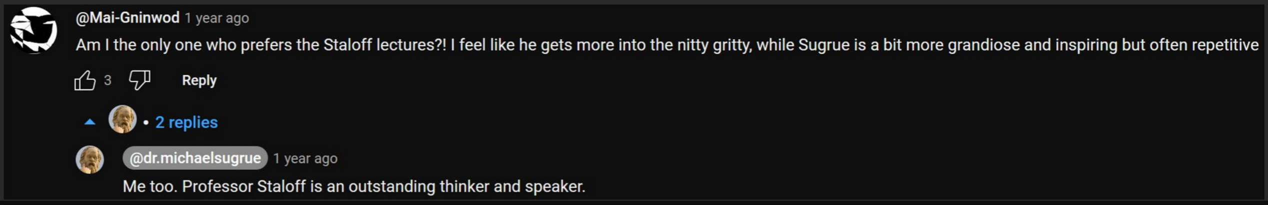
@Citizen_J 1 year ago (edited)

Dr. Staloff has reached his final form!
Another great lecture. Much appreciated.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Dr. Staloff is not a Pokemon, he is a brilliant intellectual renegade like Gouldner himself.

Dr. Darren Staloff, The Theory of Knowledge and Language

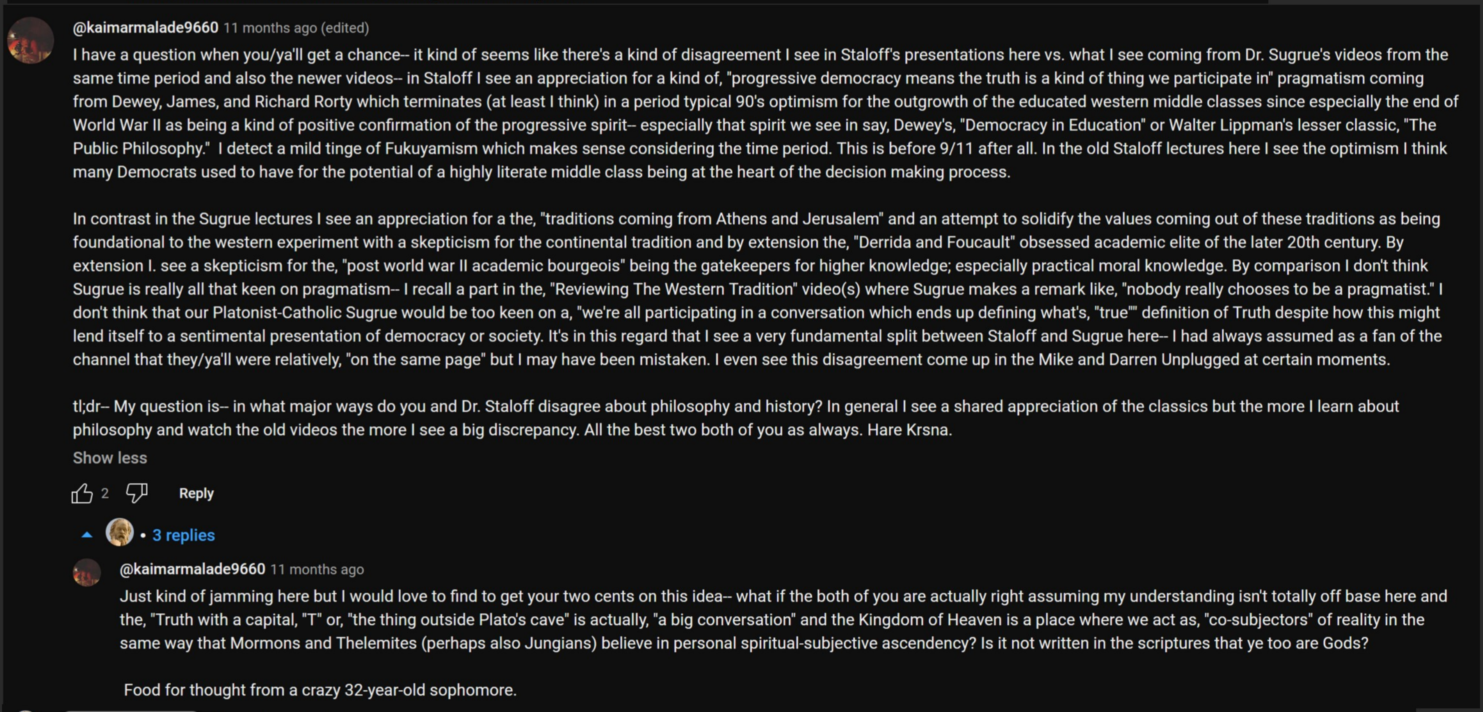


@Mai-Gninwod 1 year ago

Am I the only one who prefers the Staloff lectures?! I feel like he gets more into the nitty gritty, while Sugrue is a bit more grandiose and inspiring but often repetitive

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Me too. Professor Staloff is an outstanding thinker and speaker.



@kaimarmalade9660 11 months ago (edited)

I have a question when you/ya'll get a chance-- it kind of seems like there's a kind of disagreement I see in Staloff's presentations here vs. what I see coming from Dr. Sugrue's videos from the same time period and also the newer videos-- in Staloff I see an appreciation for a kind of, "progressive democracy means the truth is a kind of thing we participate in" pragmatism coming from Dewey, James, and Richard Rorty which terminates (at least I think) in a period typical 90's optimism for the outgrowth of the educated western middle classes since especially the end of World War II as being a kind of positive confirmation of the progressive spirit-- especially that spirit we see in say, Dewey's, "Democracy in Education" or Walter Lippman's lesser classic, "The Public Philosophy." I detect a mild tinge of Fukuyamism which makes sense considering the time period. This is before 9/11 after all. In the old Staloff lectures here I see the optimism I think many Democrats used to have for the potential of a highly literate middle class being at the heart of the decision making process.

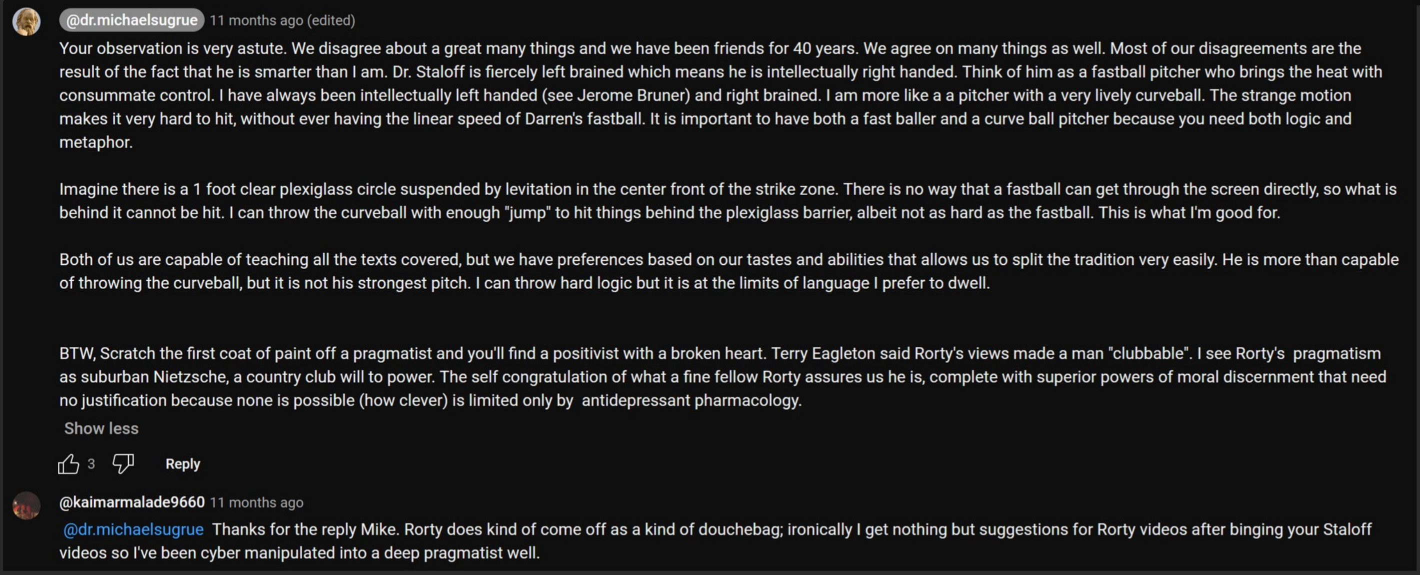
In contrast in the Sugrue lectures I see an appreciation for a the, "traditions coming from Athens and Jerusalem" and an attempt to solidify the values coming out of these traditions as being foundational to the western experiment with a skepticism for the continental tradition and by extension the, "Derrida and Foucault" obsessed academic elite of the later 20th century. By extension I. see a skepticism for the, "post world war II academic bourgeois" being the gatekeepers for higher knowledge; especially practical moral knowledge. By comparison I don't think Sugrue is really all that keen on pragmatism-- I recall a part in the, "Reviewing The Western Tradition" video(s) where Sugrue makes a remark like, "nobody really chooses to be a pragmatist." I don't think that our Platonist-Catholic Sugrue would be too keen on a, "we're all participating in a conversation which ends up defining what's, "true"" definition of Truth despite how this might lend itself to a sentimental presentation of democracy or society. It's in this regard that I see a very fundamental split between Staloff and Sugrue here-- I had always assumed as a fan of the channel that they/ya'll were relatively, "on the same page" but I may have been mistaken. I even see this disagreement come up in the Mike and Darren Unplugged at certain moments.

tl;dr-- My question is-- in what major ways do you and Dr. Staloff disagree about philosophy and history? In general I see a shared appreciation of the classics but the more I learn about philosophy and watch the old videos the more I see a big discrepancy. All the best two both of you as always. Hare Krsna.

@kaimarmalade9660 11 months ago

Just kind of jamming here but I would love to find to get your two cents on this idea-- what if the both of you are actually right assuming my understanding isn't totally off base here and the, "Truth with a capital, "T" or, "the thing outside Plato's cave" is actually, "a big conversation" and the Kingdom of Heaven is a place where we act as, "co-subjectors" of reality in the same way that Mormons and Thelemites (perhaps also Jungians) believe in personal spiritual-subjective ascendency? Is it not written in the scriptures that ye too are Gods?

Food for thought from a crazy 32-year-old sophomore.



@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago (edited)

Your observation is very astute. We disagree about a great many things and we have been friends for 40 years. We agree on many things as well. Most of our disagreements are the result of the fact that he is smarter than I am. Dr. Staloff is fiercely left brained which means he is intellectually right handed. Think of him as a fastball pitcher who brings the heat with consummate control. I have always been intellectually left handed (see Jerome Bruner) and right brained. I am more like a a pitcher with a very lively curveball. The strange motion makes it very hard to hit, without ever having the linear speed of Darren's fastball. It is important to have both a fast baller and a curve ball pitcher because you need both logic and metaphor.

Imagine there is a 1 foot clear plexiglass circle suspended by levitation in the center front of the strike zone. There is no way that a fastball can get through the screen directly, so what is behind it cannot be hit. I can throw the curveball with enough "jump" to hit things behind the plexiglass barrier, albeit not as hard as the fastball. This is what I'm good for.

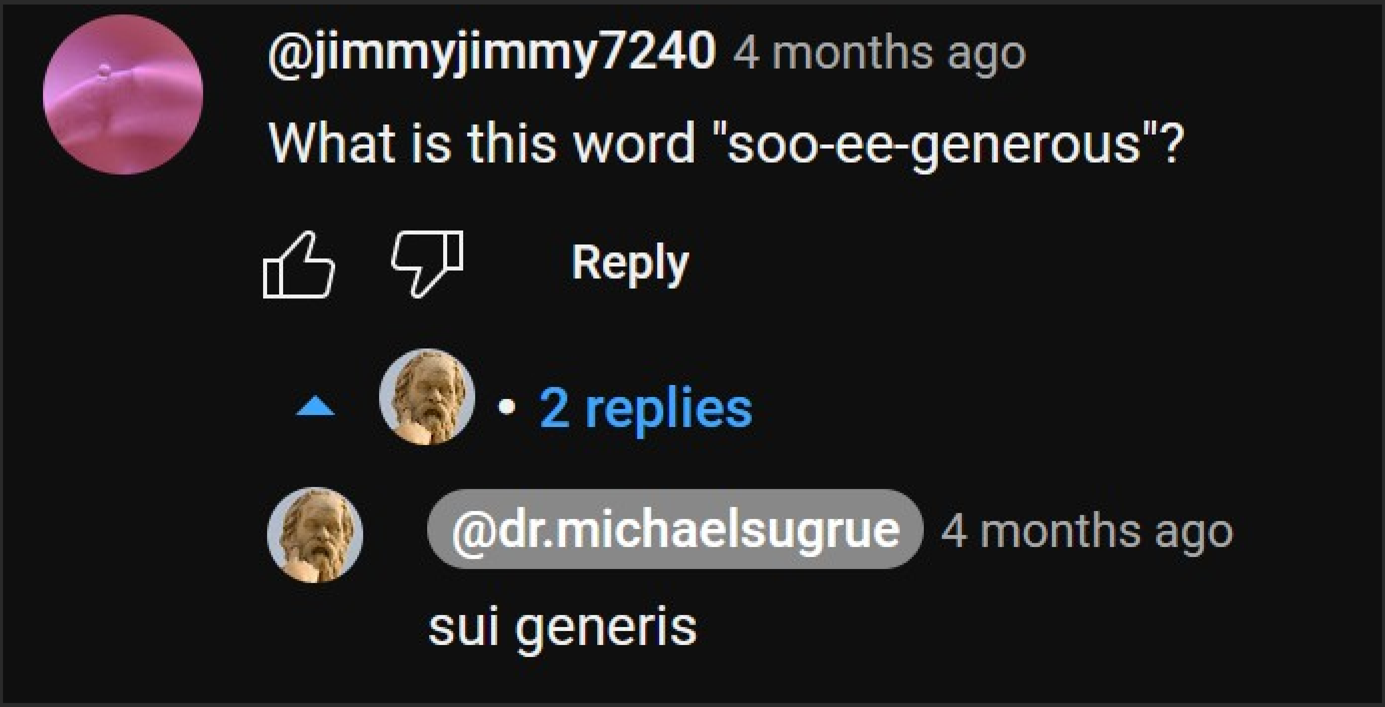
Both of us are capable of teaching all the texts covered, but we have preferences based on our tastes and abilities that allows us to split the tradition very easily. He is more than capable of throwing the curveball, but it is not his strongest pitch. I can throw hard logic but it is at the limits of language I prefer to dwell.

BTW, Scratch the first coat of paint off a pragmatist and you'll find a positivist with a broken heart. Terry Eagleton said Rorty's views made a man "clubbable". I see Rorty's pragmatism as suburban Nietzsche, a country club will to power. The self congratulation of what a fine fellow Rorty assures us he is, complete with superior powers of moral discernment that need no justification because none is possible (how clever) is limited only by antidepressant pharmacology.

@kaimarmalade9660 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Thanks for the reply Mike. Rorty does kind of come off as a kind of douchebag; ironically I get nothing but suggestions for Rorty videos after binging your Staloff videos so I've been cyber manipulated into a deep pragmatist well.

Dr. Darren Staloff, William Graham Sumner



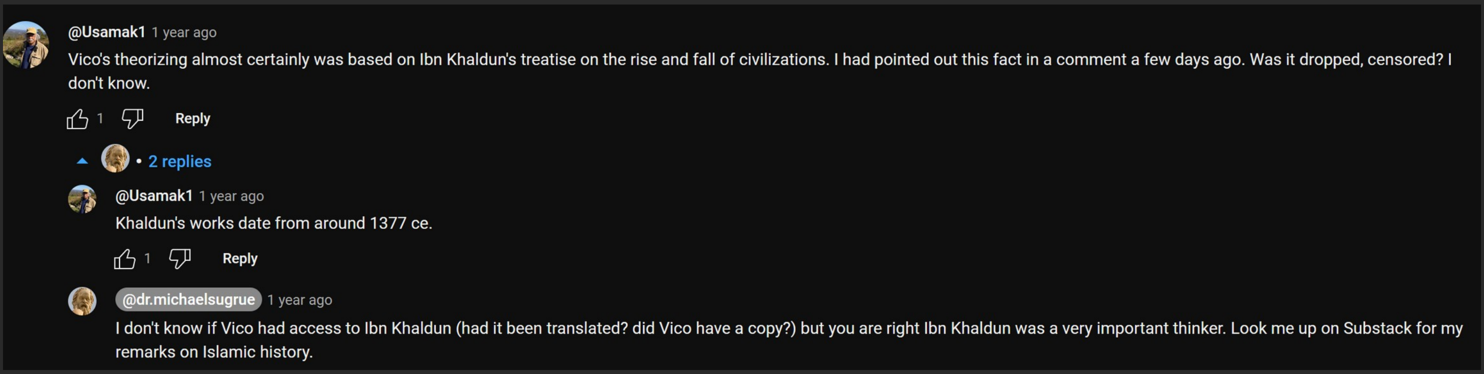
@jimmyjimmy7240 4 months ago

What is this word "soo-ee-generous"?

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

sui generis

Dr. Darren Staloff, Vico's New Science of History



@Usamak1 1 year ago

Vico's theorizing almost certainly was based on Ibn Khaldun's treatise on the rise and fall of civilizations. I had pointed out this fact in a comment a few days ago. Was it dropped, censored? I don't know.

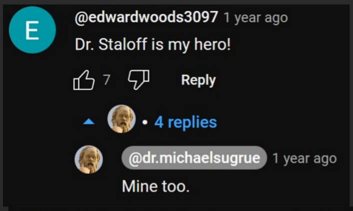
@Usamak1 1 year ago

Khaldun's works date from around 1377 ce.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't know if Vico had access to Ibn Khaldun (had it been translated? did Vico have a copy?) but you are right Ibn Khaldun was a very important thinker. Look me up on Substack for my remarks on Islamic history.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Kant's Idea for a Universal History

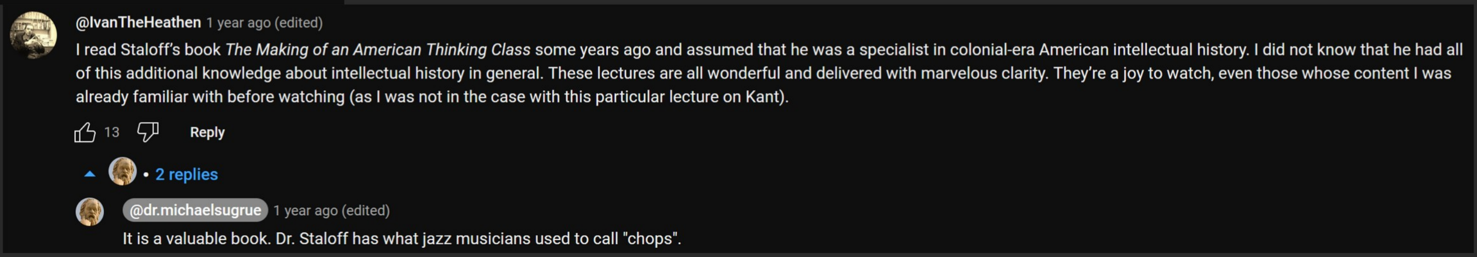


@edwardwoods3097 1 year ago

Dr. Staloff is my hero!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Mine too.



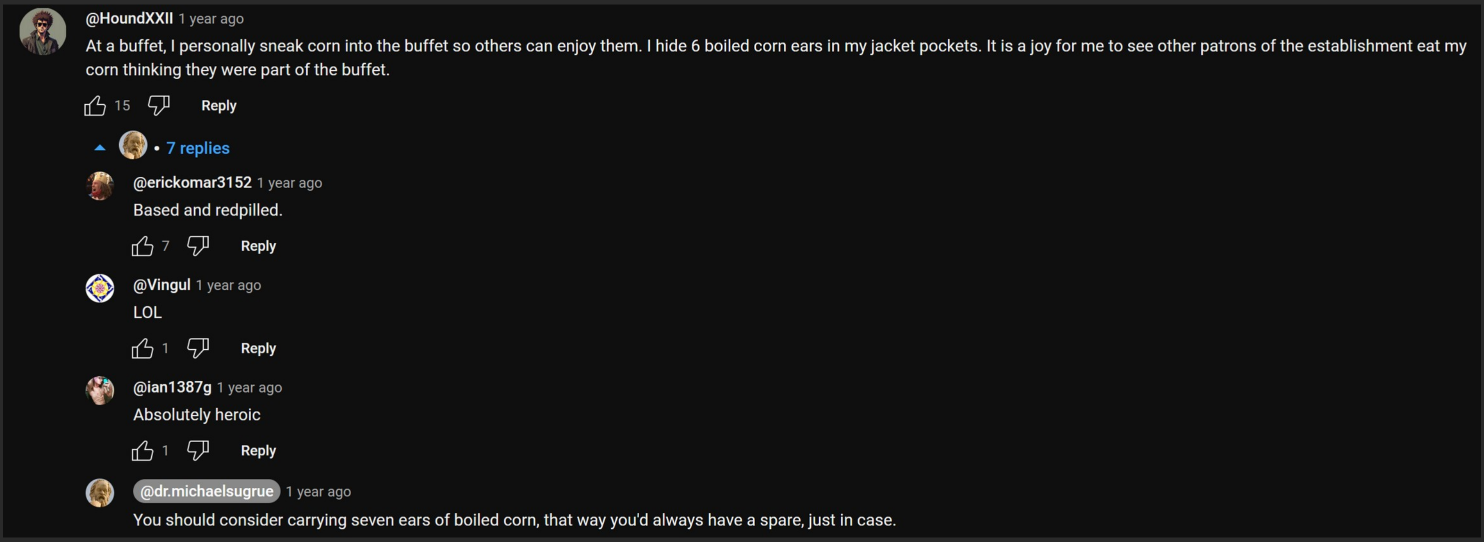
@IvanTheHeathen 1 year ago (edited)

I read Staloff's book *The Making of an American Thinking Class* some years ago and assumed that he was a specialist in colonial-era American intellectual history. I did not know that he had all of this additional knowledge about intellectual history in general. These lectures are all wonderful and delivered with marvelous clarity. They're a joy to watch, even those whose content I was already familiar with before watching (as I was not in the case with this particular lecture on Kant).

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

It is a valuable book. Dr. Staloff has what jazz musicians used to call "chops".

Dr. Darren Staloff, R.G. Collingwood's "The Idea of History"



@HoundXXII 1 year ago

At a buffet, I personally sneak corn into the buffet so others can enjoy them. I hide 6 boiled corn ears in my jacket pockets. It is a joy for me to see other patrons of the establishment eat my corn thinking they were part of the buffet.

15 Reply

• 7 replies

@erickomar3152 1 year ago

Based and redpilled.

7 Reply

@Vingul 1 year ago

LOL

1 Reply

@ian1387g 1 year ago

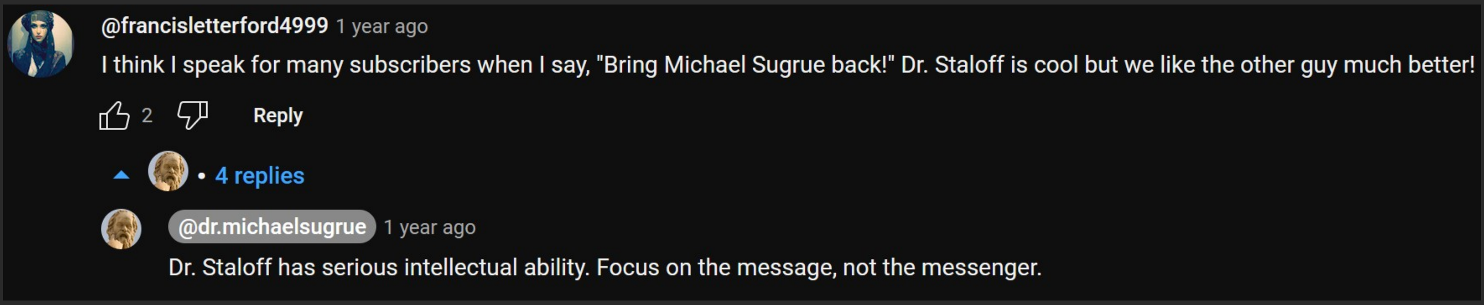
Absolutely heroic

1 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You should consider carrying seven ears of boiled corn, that way you'd always have a spare, just in case.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Arthur Danto's Narration and Knowledge



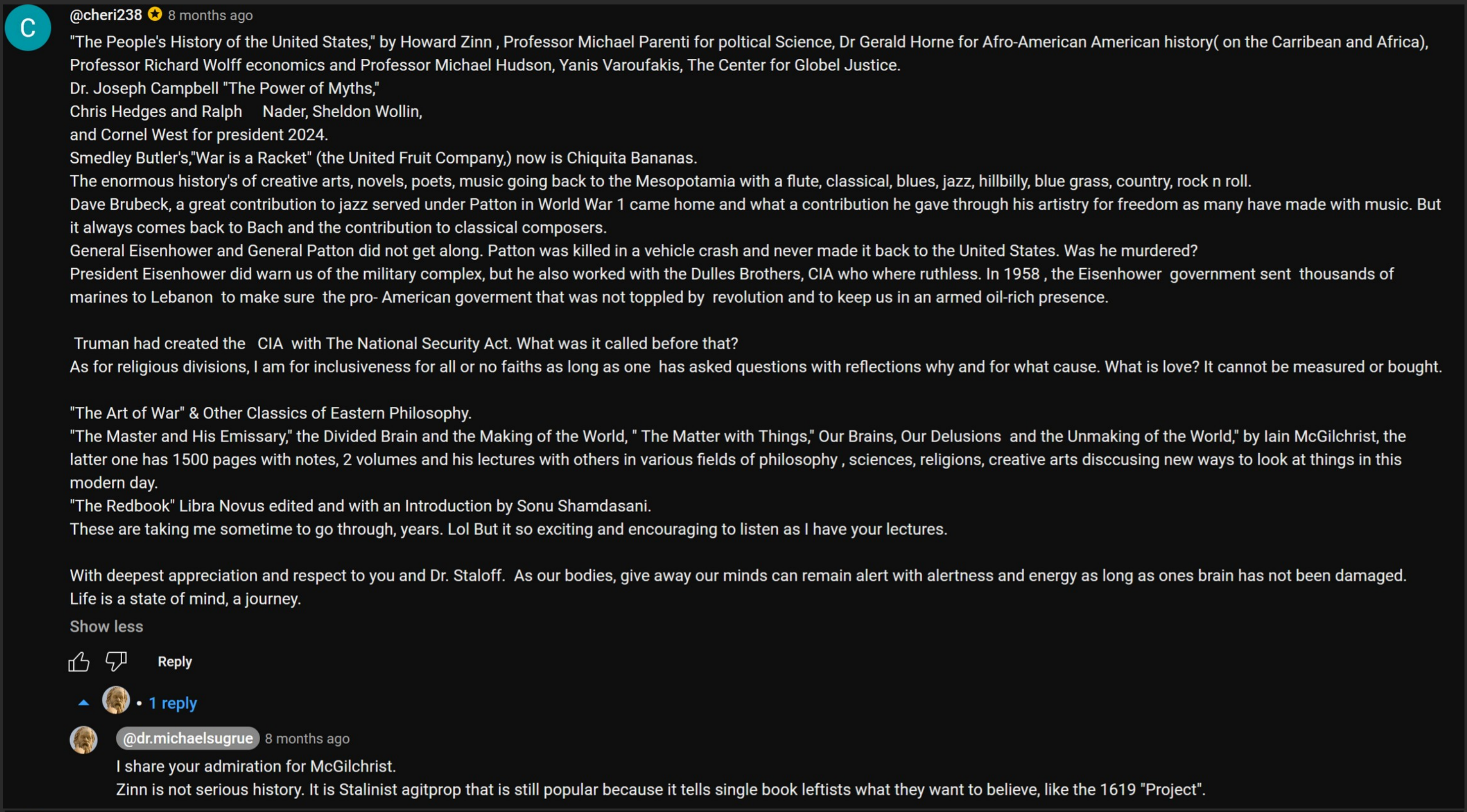
@francisletterford4999 1 year ago

I think I speak for many subscribers when I say, "Bring Michael Sugrue back!" Dr. Staloff is cool but we like the other guy much better!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Dr. Staloff has serious intellectual ability. Focus on the message, not the messenger.

Q&A with Royal Northern College of Music



@cheri238 8 months ago

"The People's History of the United States," by Howard Zinn , Professor Michael Parenti for poltical Science, Dr Gerald Horne for Afro-American American history(on the Carribean and Africa), Professor Richard Wolff economics and Professor Michael Hudson, Yanis Varoufakis, The Center for Globel Justice.
Dr. Joseph Campbell "The Power of Myths,"
Chris Hedges and Ralph Nader, Sheldon Wollin,
and Cornel West for president 2024.
Smedley Butler's,"War is a Racket" (the United Fruit Company,) now is Chiquita Bananas.
The enormous history's of creative arts, novels, poets, music going back to the Mesopotamia with a flute, classical, blues, jazz, hillbilly, blue grass, country, rock n roll.
Dave Brubeck, a great contribution to jazz served under Patton in World War 1 came home and what a contribution he gave through his artistry for freedom as many have made with music. But it always comes back to Bach and the contribution to classical composers.
General Eisenhower and General Patton did not get along. Patton was killed in a vehicle crash and never made it back to the United States. Was he murdered?
President Eisenhower did warn us of the military complex, but he also worked with the Dulles Brothers, CIA who where ruthless. In 1958 , the Eisenhower government sent thousands of marines to Lebanon to make sure the pro- American goverment that was not toppled by revolution and to keep us in an armed oil-rich presence.

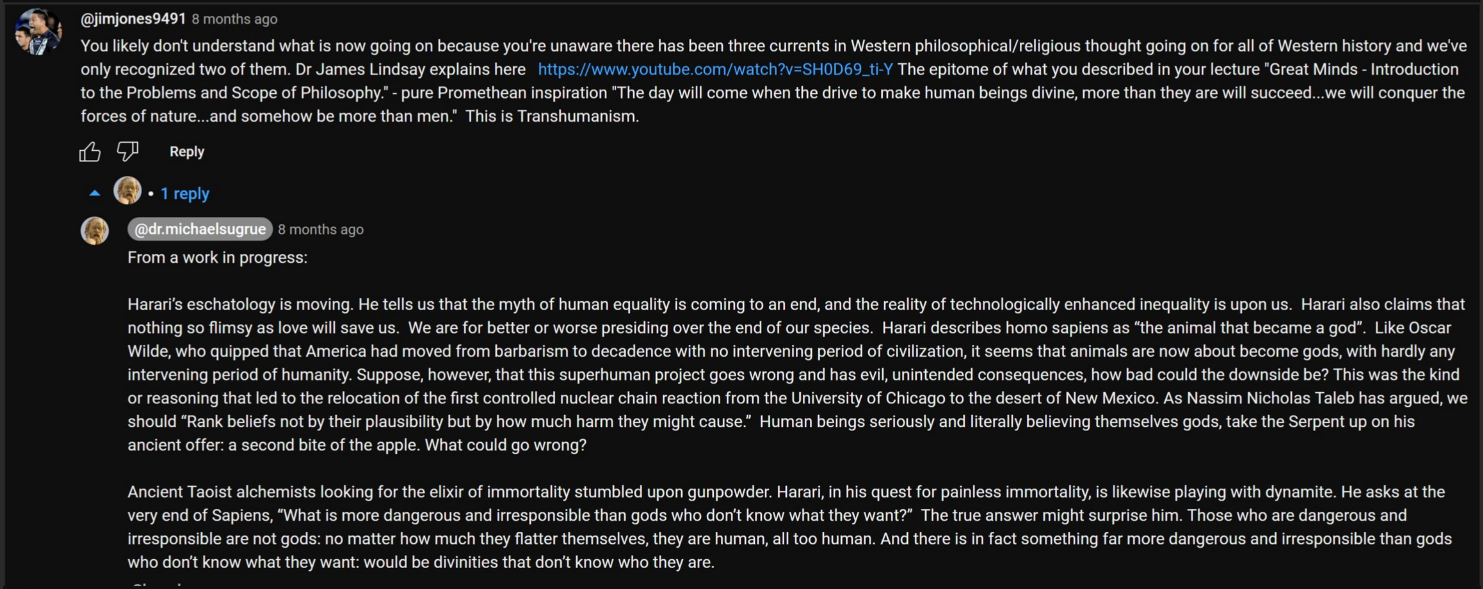
Truman had created the CIA with The National Security Act. What was it called before that?
As for religious divisions, I am for inclusiveness for all or no faiths as long as one has asked questions with reflections why and for what cause. What is love? It cannot be measured or bought.

"The Art of War" & Other Classics of Eastern Philosophy.
"The Master and His Emissary," the Divided Brain and the Making of the World, " The Matter with Things," Our Brains, Our Delusions and the Unmaking of the World," by Iain McGilchrist, the latter one has 1500 pages with notes, 2 volumes and his lectures with others in various fields of philosophy , sciences, religions, creative arts disccusing new ways to look at things in this modern day.
"The Redbook" Libra Novus edited and with an Introduction by Sonu Shamdasani.
These are taking me sometime to go through, years. Lol But it so exciting and encouraging to listen as I have your lectures.

With deepest appreciation and respect to you and Dr. Staloff. As our bodies, give away our minds can remain alert with alertness and energy as long as ones brain has not been damaged. Life is a state of mind, a journey.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I share your admiration for McGilchrist.
Zinn is not serious history. It is Stalinist agitprop that is still popular because it tells single book leftists what they want to believe, like the 1619 "Project".



@jimjones9491 8 months ago

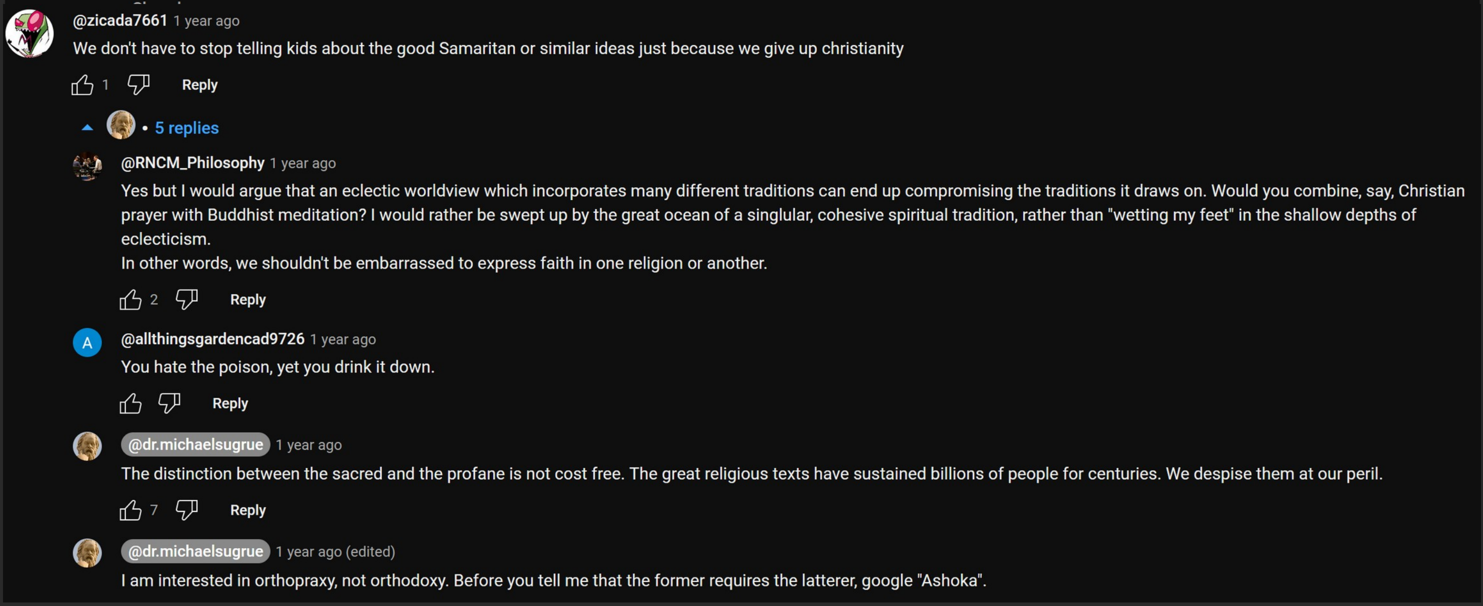
You likely don't understand what is now going on because you're unaware there has been three currents in Western philosophical/religious thought going on for all of Western history and we've only recognized two of them. Dr James Lindsay explains here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SH0D69_ti-Y The epitome of what you described in your lecture "Great Minds - Introduction to the Problems and Scope of Philosophy." - pure Promethean inspiration "The day will come when the drive to make human beings divine, more than they are will succeed...we will conquer the forces of nature...and somehow be more than men." This is Transhumanism.

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

From a work in progress:

Harari's eschatology is moving. He tells us that the myth of human equality is coming to an end, and the reality of technologically enhanced inequality is upon us. Harari also claims that nothing so flimsy as love will save us. We are for better or worse presiding over the end of our species. Harari describes homo sapiens as "the animal that became a god". Like Oscar Wilde, who quipped that America had moved from barbarism to decadence with no intervening period of civilization, it seems that animals are now about become gods, with hardly any intervening period of humanity. Suppose, however, that this superhuman project goes wrong and has evil, unintended consequences, how bad could the downside be? This was the kind or reasoning that led to the relocation of the first controlled nuclear chain reaction from the University of Chicago to the desert of New Mexico. As Nassim Nicholas Taleb has argued, we should "Rank beliefs not by their plausibility but by how much harm they might cause." Human beings seriously and literally believing themselves gods, take the Serpent up on his ancient offer: a second bite of the apple. What could go wrong?

Ancient Taoist alchemists looking for the elixir of immortality stumbled upon gunpowder. Harari, in his quest for painless immortality, is likewise playing with dynamite. He asks at the very end of Sapiens, "What is more dangerous and irresponsible than gods who don't know what they want?" The true answer might surprise him. Those who are dangerous and irresponsible are not gods: no matter how much they flatter themselves, they are human, all too human. And there is in fact something far more dangerous and irresponsible than gods who don't know what they want: would be divinities that don't know who they are.



@zicada7661 1 year ago

We don't have to stop telling kids about the good Samaritan or similar ideas just because we give up christianity

@RNCM_Philosophy 1 year ago

Yes but I would argue that an eclectic worldview which incorporates many different traditions can end up compromising the traditions it draws on. Would you combine, say, Christian prayer with Buddhist meditation? I would rather be swept up by the great ocean of a singlular, cohesive spiritual tradition, rather than "wetting my feet" in the shallow depths of eclecticism.
In other words, we shouldn't be embarrassed to express faith in one religion or another.

@allthingsgardencad9726 1 year ago

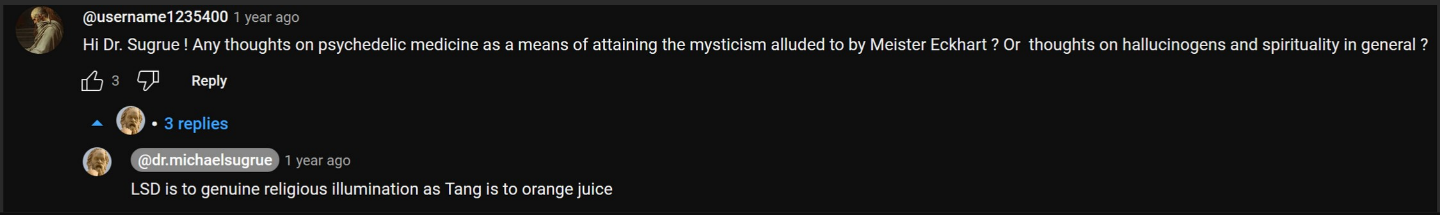
You hate the poison, yet you drink it down.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The distinction between the sacred and the profane is not cost free. The great religious texts have sustained billions of people for centuries. We despise them at our peril.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I am interested in orthopraxy, not orthodoxy. Before you tell me that the former requires the latterer, google "Ashoka".

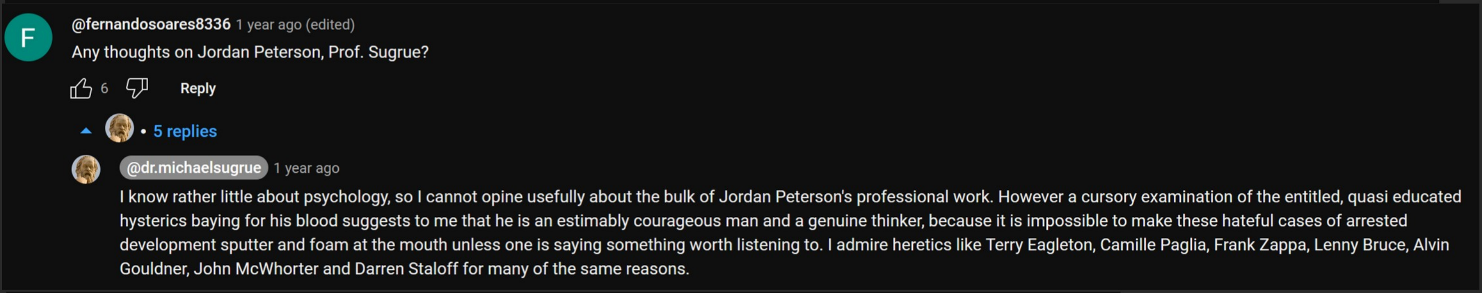


@username1235400 1 year ago

Hi Dr. Sugrue ! Any thoughts on psychedelic medicine as a means of attaining the mysticism alluded to by Meister Eckhart ? Or thoughts on hallucinogens and spirituality in general ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

LSD is to genuine religious illumination as Tang is to orange juice

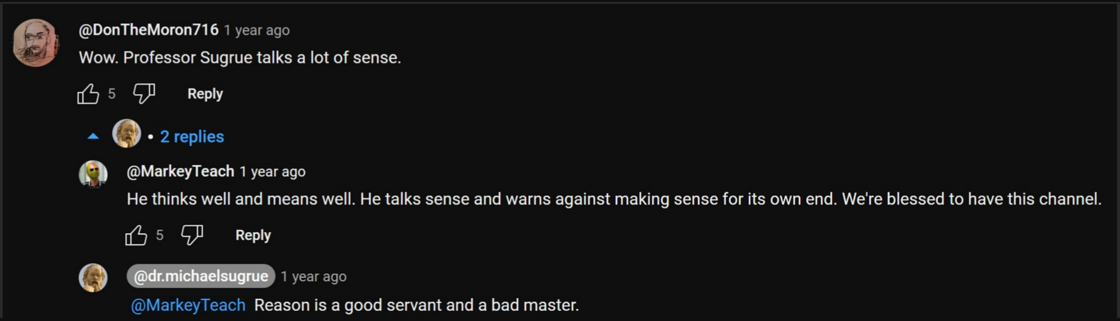


@fernandosoares8336 1 year ago (edited)

Any thoughts on Jordan Peterson, Prof. Sugrue?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I know rather little about psychology, so I cannot opine usefully about the bulk of Jordan Peterson's professional work. However a cursory examination of the entitled, quasi educated hysterics baying for his blood suggests to me that he is an estimably courageous man and a genuine thinker, because it is impossible to make these hateful cases of arrested development sputter and foam at the mouth unless one is saying something worth listening to. I admire heretics like Terry Eagleton, Camille Paglia, Frank Zappa, Lenny Bruce, Alvin Gouldner, John McWhorter and Darren Staloff for many of the same reasons.



@DonTheMoron716 1 year ago

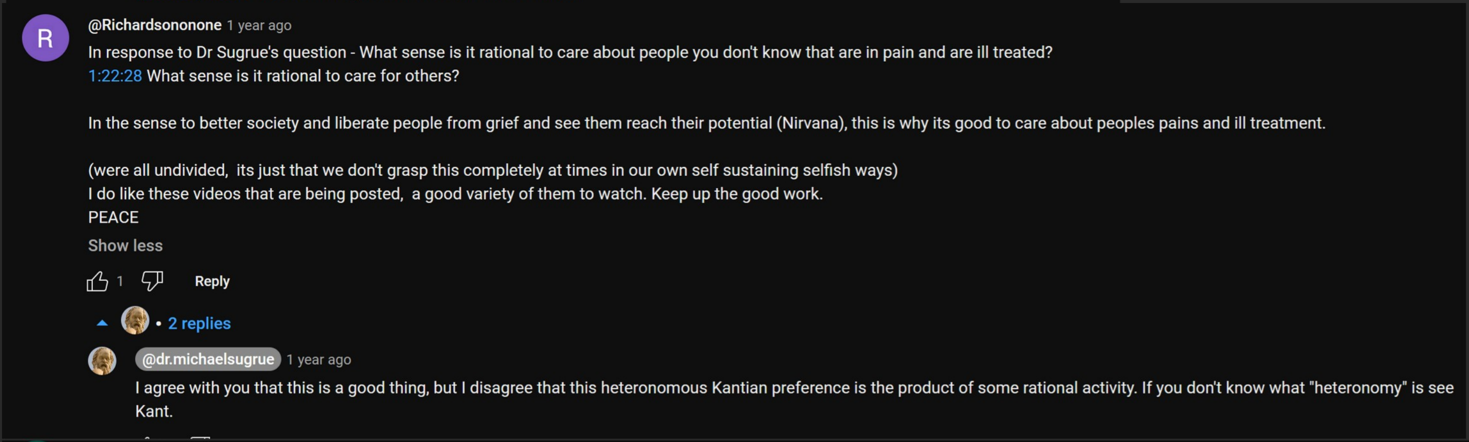
Wow. Professor Sugrue talks a lot of sense.

@MarkeyTeach 1 year ago

He thinks well and means well. He talks sense and warns against making sense for its own end. We're blessed to have this channel.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@MarkeyTeach Reason is a good servant and a bad master.



@Richardsononone 1 year ago

In response to Dr Sugrue's question - What sense is it rational to care about people you don't know that are in pain and are ill treated?
1:22:28 What sense is it rational to care for others?

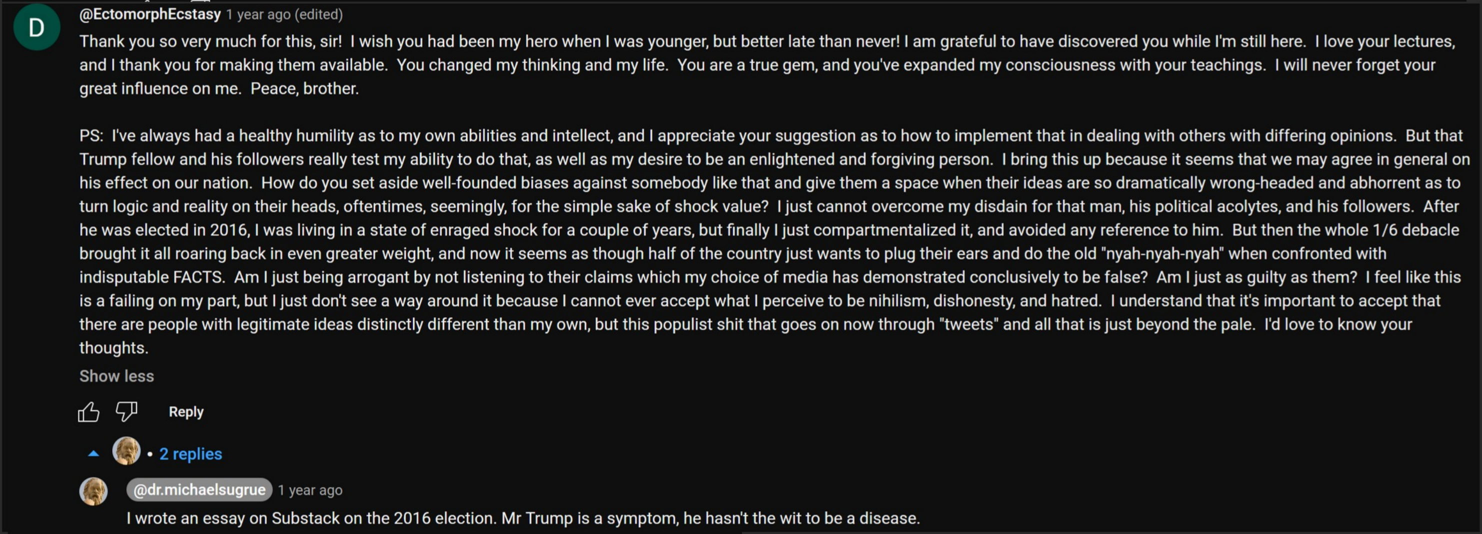
In the sense to better society and liberate people from grief and see them reach their potential (Nirvana), this is why its good to care about peoples pains and ill treatment.

(were all undivided, its just that we don't grasp this completely at times in our own self sustaining selfish ways)
I do like these videos that are being posted, a good variety of them to watch. Keep up the good work.
PEACE

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I agree with you that this is a good thing, but I disagree that this heteronomous Kantian preference is the product of some rational activity. If you don't know what "heteronomy" is see Kant.



@EctomorphEcstasy 1 year ago (edited)

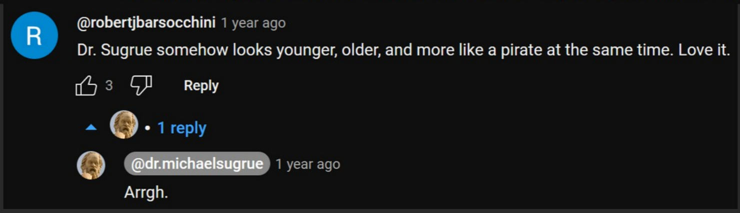
Thank you so very much for this, sir! I wish you had been my hero when I was younger, but better late than never! I am grateful to have discovered you while I'm still here. I love your lectures, and I thank you for making them available. You changed my thinking and my life. You are a true gem, and you've expanded my consciousness with your teachings. I will never forget your great influence on me. Peace, brother.

PS: I've always had a healthy humility as to my own abilities and intellect, and I appreciate your suggestion as to how to implement that in dealing with others with differing opinions. But that Trump fellow and his followers really test my ability to do that, as well as my desire to be an enlightened and forgiving person. I bring this up because it seems that we may agree in general on his effect on our nation. How do you set aside well-founded biases against somebody like that and give them a space when their ideas are so dramatically wrong-headed and abhorrent as to turn logic and reality on their heads, oftentimes, seemingly, for the simple sake of shock value? I just cannot overcome my disdain for that man, his political acolytes, and his followers. After he was elected in 2016, I was living in a state of enraged shock for a couple of years, but finally I just compartmentalized it, and avoided any reference to him. But then the whole 1/6 debacle brought it all roaring back in even greater weight, and now it seems as though half of the country just wants to plug their ears and do the old "nyah-nyah-nyah" when confronted with indisputable FACTS. Am I just being arrogant by not listening to their claims which my choice of media has demonstrated conclusively to be false? Am I just as guilty as them? I feel like this is a failing on my part, but I just don't see a way around it because I cannot ever accept what I perceive to be nihilism, dishonesty, and hatred. I understand that it's important to accept that there are people with legitimate ideas distinctly different than my own, but this populist shit that goes on now through "tweets" and all that is just beyond the pale. I'd love to know your thoughts.

Show less

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I wrote an essay on Substack on the 2016 election. Mr Trump is a symptom, he hasn't the wit to be a disease.



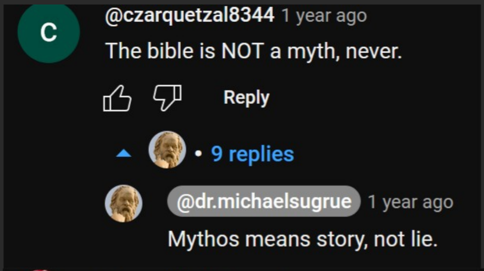
@robertjbarsocchini 1 year ago

Dr. Sugrue somehow looks younger, older, and more like a pirate at the same time. Love it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Arrgh.

Conclusion: Reviewing the Western Tradition (Part 1+2)

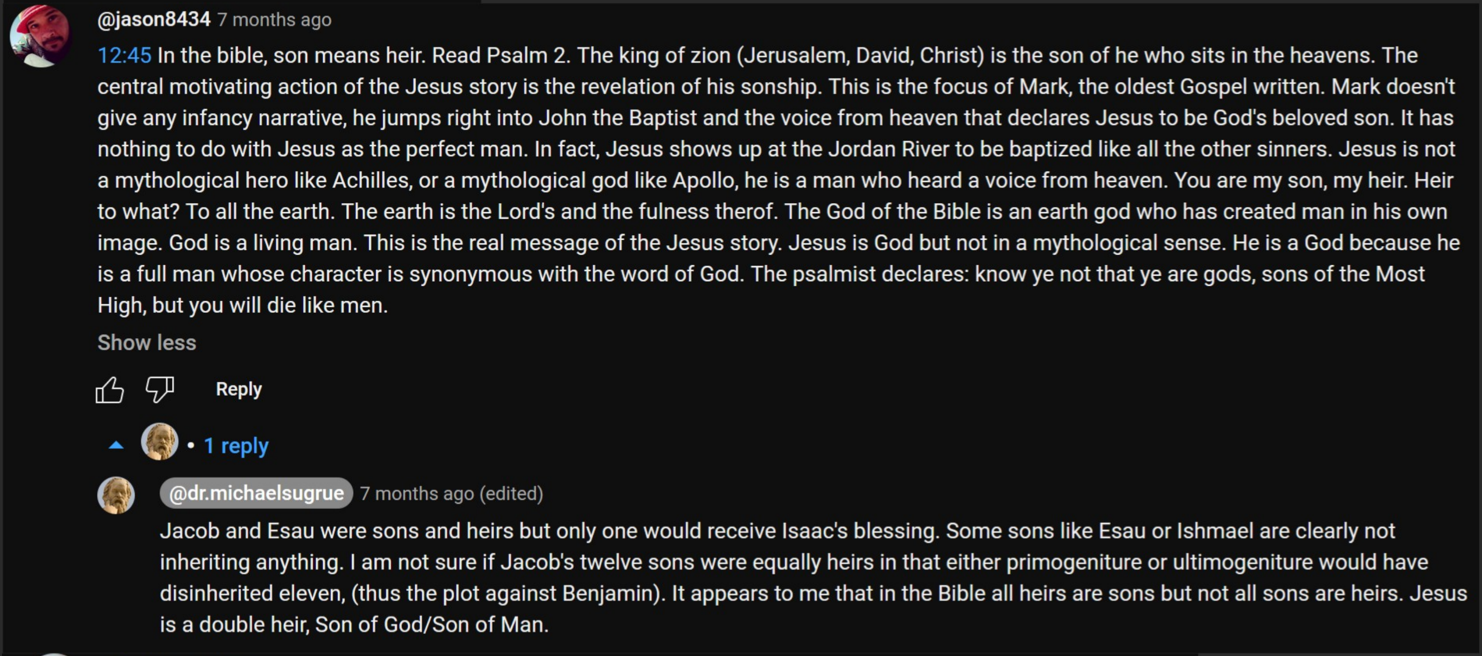


@czarquetzal8344 1 year ago

The bible is NOT a myth, never.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Mythos means story, not lie.

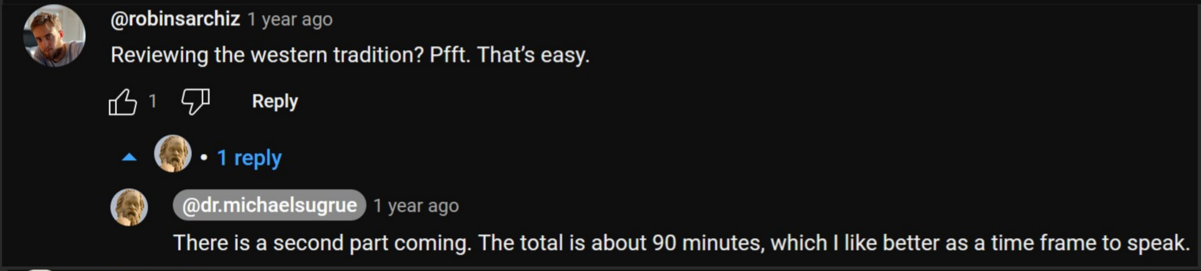


@jason8434 7 months ago

12:45 In the bible, son means heir. Read Psalm 2. The king of zion (Jerusalem, David, Christ) is the son of he who sits in the heavens. The central motivating action of the Jesus story is the revelation of his sonship. This is the focus of Mark, the oldest Gospel written. Mark doesn't give any infancy narrative, he jumps right into John the Baptist and the voice from heaven that declares Jesus to be God's beloved son. It has nothing to do with Jesus as the perfect man. In fact, Jesus shows up at the Jordan River to be baptized like all the other sinners. Jesus is not a mythological hero like Achilles, or a mythological god like Apollo, he is a man who heard a voice from heaven. You are my son, my heir. Heir to what? To all the earth. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness therof. The God of the Bible is an earth god who has created man in his own image. God is a living man. This is the real message of the Jesus story. Jesus is God but not in a mythological sense. He is a God because he is a full man whose character is synonymous with the word of God. The psalmist declares: know ye not that ye are gods, sons of the Most High, but you will die like men.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

Jacob and Esau were sons and heirs but only one would receive Isaac's blessing. Some sons like Esau or Ishmael are clearly not inheriting anything. I am not sure if Jacob's twelve sons were equally heirs in that either primogeniture or ultimogeniture would have disinherited eleven, (thus the plot against Benjamin). It appears to me that in the Bible all heirs are sons but not all sons are heirs. Jesus is a double heir, Son of God/Son of Man.

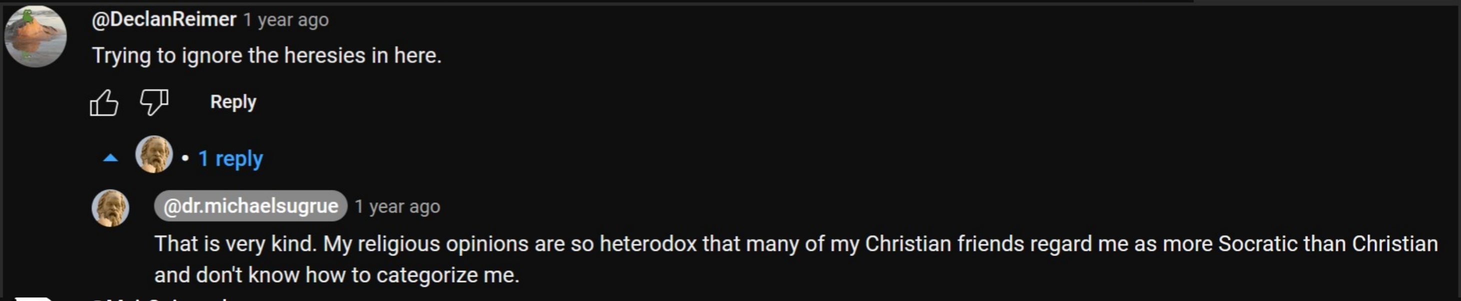


@robinsarchiz 1 year ago

Reviewing the western tradition? Pfft. That's easy.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

There is a second part coming. The total is about 90 minutes, which I like better as a time frame to speak.

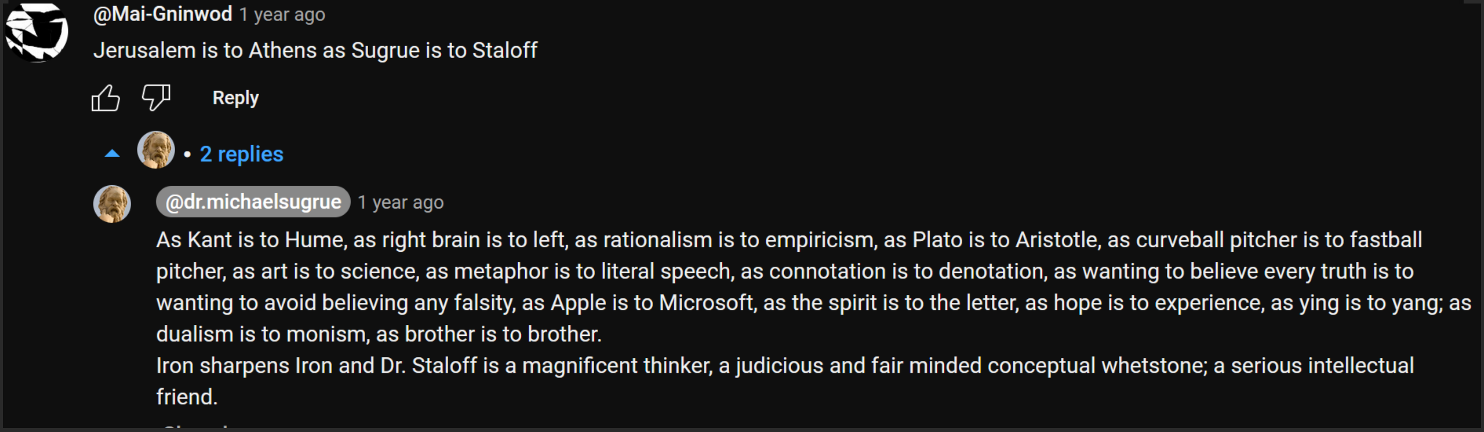


@DeclanReimer 1 year ago

Trying to ignore the heresies in here.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

That is very kind. My religious opinions are so heterodox that many of my Christian friends regard me as more Socratic than Christian and don't know how to categorize me.



@Mai-Gninwod 1 year ago

Jerusalem is to Athens as Sugrue is to Staloff

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

As Kant is to Hume, as right brain is to left, as rationalism is to empiricism, as Plato is to Aristotle, as curveball pitcher is to fastball pitcher, as art is to science, as metaphor is to literal speech, as connotation is to denotation, as wanting to believe every truth is to wanting to avoid believing any falsity, as Apple is to Microsoft, as the spirit is to the letter, as hope is to experience, as ying is to yang; as dualism is to monism, as brother is to brother.
Iron sharpens Iron and Dr. Staloff is a magnificent thinker, a judicious and fair minded conceptual whetstone; a serious intellectual friend.

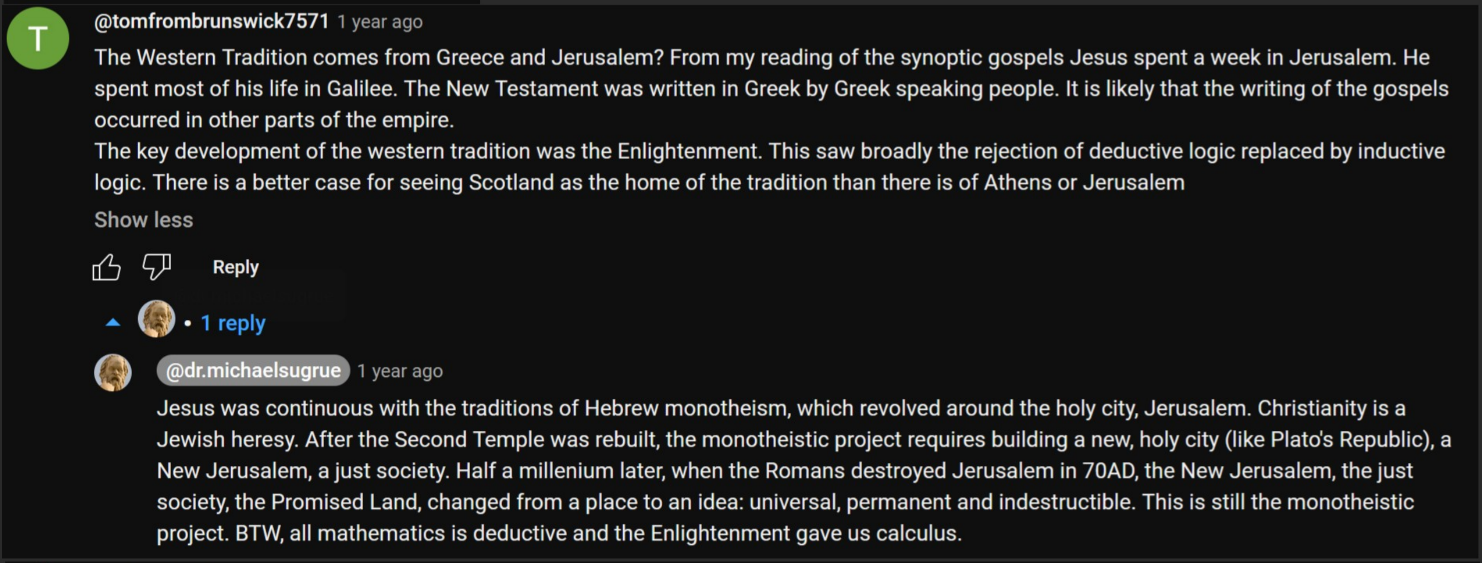
Reply
1 reply

@brianreeves 1 year ago

Donkey Hotei?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Fonetty kinglish

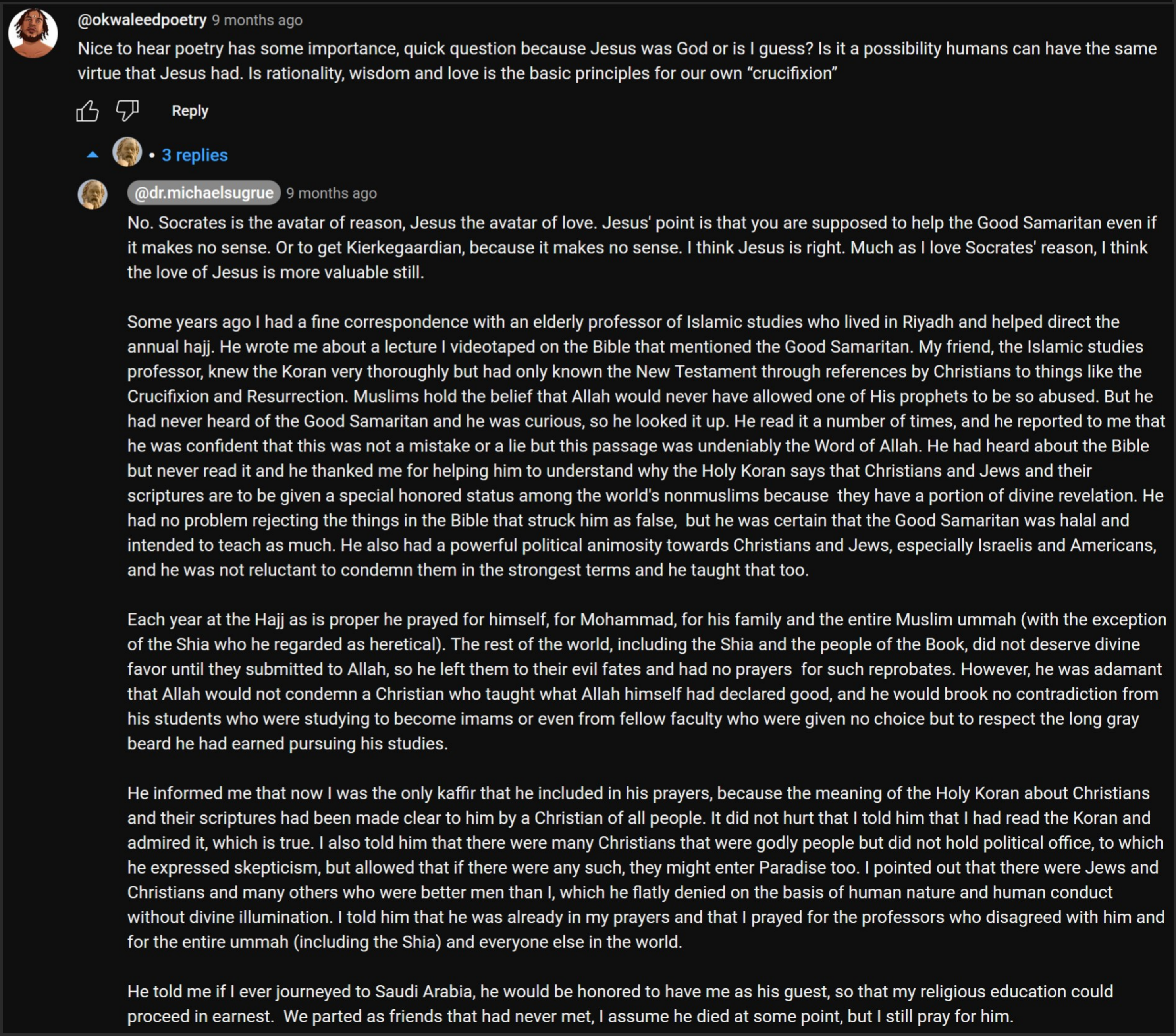


@tomfrombrunswick7571 1 year ago

The Western Tradition comes from Greece and Jerusalem? From my reading of the synoptic gospels Jesus spent a week in Jerusalem. He spent most of his life in Galilee. The New Testament was written in Greek by Greek speaking people. It is likely that the writing of the gospels occurred in other parts of the empire.
The key development of the western tradition was the Enlightenment. This saw broadly the rejection of deductive logic replaced by inductive logic. There is a better case for seeing Scotland as the home of the tradition than there is of Athens or Jerusalem

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Jesus was continuous with the traditions of Hebrew monotheism, which revolved around the holy city, Jerusalem. Christianity is a Jewish heresy. After the Second Temple was rebuilt, the monotheistic project requires building a new, holy city (like Plato's Republic), a New Jerusalem, a just society. Half a millenium later, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70AD, the New Jerusalem, the just society, the Promised Land, changed from a place to an idea: universal, permanent and indestructible. This is still the monotheistic project. BTW, all mathematics is deductive and the Enlightenment gave us calculus.



@okwaleedpoetry 9 months ago

Nice to hear poetry has some importance, quick question because Jesus was God or is I guess? Is it a possibility humans can have the same virtue that Jesus had. Is rationality, wisdom and love is the basic principles for our own "crucifixion"

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

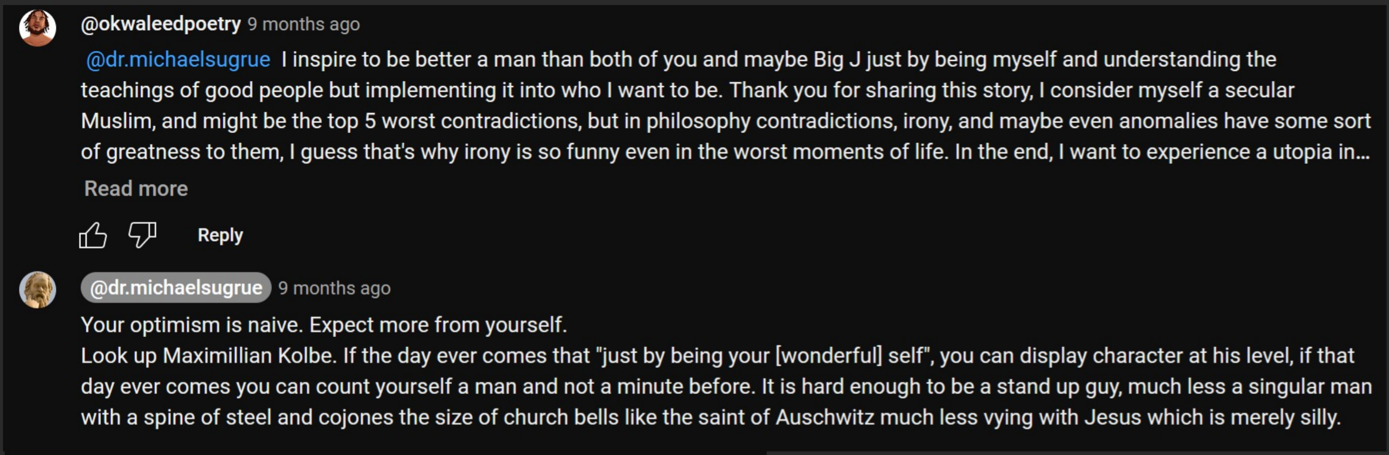
No. Socrates is the avatar of reason, Jesus the avatar of love. Jesus' point is that you are supposed to help the Good Samaritan even if it makes no sense. Or to get Kierkegaardian, because it makes no sense. I think Jesus is right. Much as I love Socrates' reason, I think the love of Jesus is more valuable still.

Some years ago I had a fine correspondence with an elderly professor of Islamic studies who lived in Riyadh and helped direct the annual hajj. He wrote me about a lecture I videotaped on the Bible that mentioned the Good Samaritan. My friend, the Islamic studies professor, knew the Koran very thoroughly but had only known the New Testament through references by Christians to things like the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Muslims hold the belief that Allah would never have allowed one of His prophets to be so abused. But he had never heard of the Good Samaritan and he was curious, so he looked it up. He read it a number of times, and he reported to me that he was confident that this was not a mistake or a lie but this passage was undeniably the Word of Allah. He had heard about the Bible but never read it and he thanked me for helping him to understand why the Holy Koran says that Christians and Jews and their scriptures are to be given a special honored status among the world's nonmuslims because they have a portion of divine revelation. He had no problem rejecting the things in the Bible that struck him as false, but he was certain that the Good Samaritan was halal and intended to teach as much. He also had a powerful political animosity towards Christians and Jews, especially Israelis and Americans, and he was not reluctant to condemn them in the strongest terms and he taught that too.

Each year at the Hajj as is proper he prayed for himself, for Mohammad, for his family and the entire Muslim ummah (with the exception of the Shia who he regarded as heretical). The rest of the world, including the Shia and the people of the Book, did not deserve divine favor until they submitted to Allah, so he left them to their evil fates and had no prayers for such reprobates. However, he was adamant that Allah would not condemn a Christian who taught what Allah himself had declared good, and he would brook no contradiction from his students who were studying to become imams or even from fellow faculty who were given no choice but to respect the long gray beard he had earned pursuing his studies.

He informed me that now I was the only kaffir that he included in his prayers, because the meaning of the Holy Koran about Christians and their scriptures had been made clear to him by a Christian of all people. It did not hurt that I told him that I had read the Koran and admired it, which is true. I also told him that there were many Christians that were godly people but did not hold political office, to which he expressed skepticism, but allowed that if there were any such, they might enter Paradise too. I pointed out that there were Jews and Christians and many others who were better men than I, which he flatly denied on the basis of human nature and human conduct without divine illumination. I told him that he was already in my prayers and that I prayed for the professors who disagreed with him and for the entire ummah (including the Shia) and everyone else in the world.

He told me if I ever journeyed to Saudi Arabia, he would be honored to have me as his guest, so that my religious education could proceed in earnest. We parted as friends that had never met, I assume he died at some point, but I still pray for him.

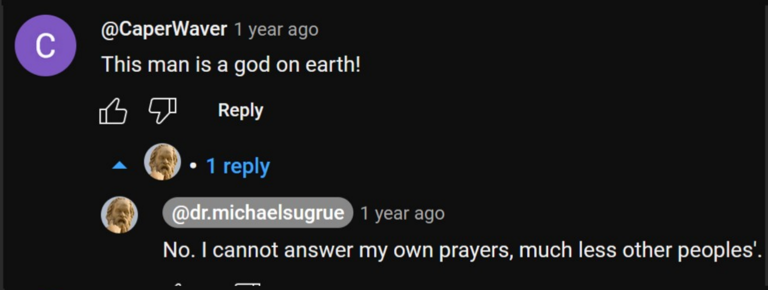


@okwaleedpoetry 9 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I inspire to be better a man than both of you and maybe Big J just by being myself and understanding the teachings of good people but implementing it into who I want to be. Thank you for sharing this story, I consider myself a secular Muslim, and might be the top 5 worst contradictions, but in philosophy contradictions, irony, and maybe even anomalies have some sort of greatness to them, I guess that's why irony is so funny even in the worst moments of life. In the end, I want to experience a utopia in...

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

Your optimism is naive. Expect more from yourself.
Look up Maximillian Kolbe. If the day ever comes that "just by being your [wonderful] self", you can display character at his level, if that day ever comes you can count yourself a man and not a minute before. It is hard enough to be a stand up guy, much less a singular man with a spine of steel and cojones the size of church bells like the saint of Auschwitz much less vying with Jesus which is merely silly.

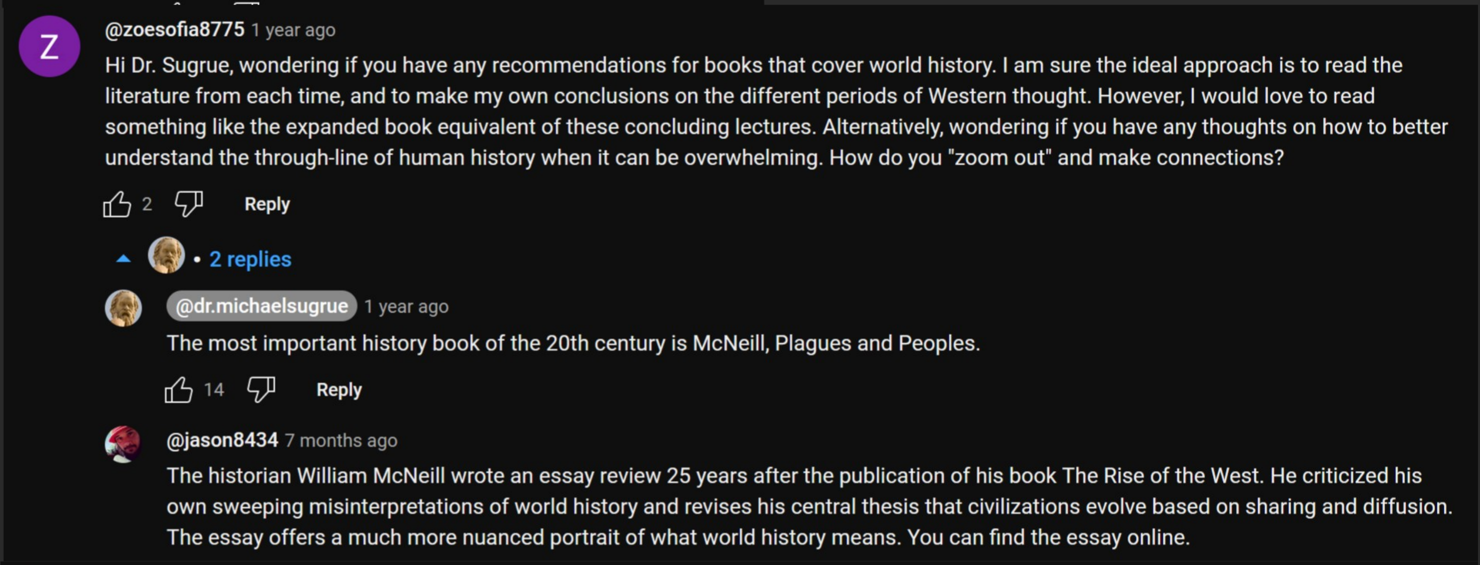


@CaperWaver 1 year ago

This man is a god on earth!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

No. I cannot answer my own prayers, much less other peoples'.



@zoesofia8775 1 year ago

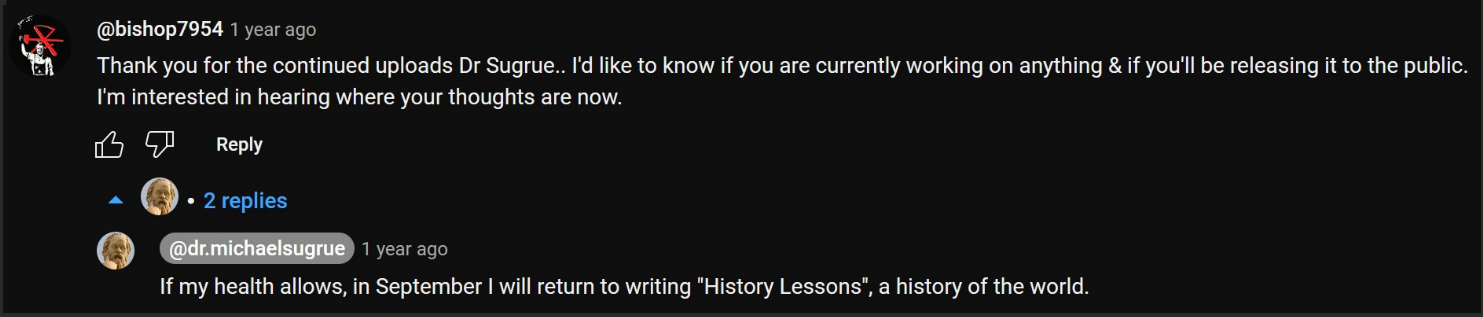
Hi Dr. Sugrue, wondering if you have any recommendations for books that cover world history. I am sure the ideal approach is to read the literature from each time, and to make my own conclusions on the different periods of Western thought. However, I would love to read something like the expanded book equivalent of these concluding lectures. Alternatively, wondering if you have any thoughts on how to better understand the through-line of human history when it can be overwhelming. How do you "zoom out" and make connections?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The most important history book of the 20th century is McNeill, Plagues and Peoples.

@jason8434 7 months ago

The historian William McNeill wrote an essay review 25 years after the publication of his book The Rise of the West. He criticized his own sweeping misinterpretations of world history and revises his central thesis that civilizations evolve based on sharing and diffusion. The essay offers a much more nuanced portrait of what world history means. You can find the essay online.

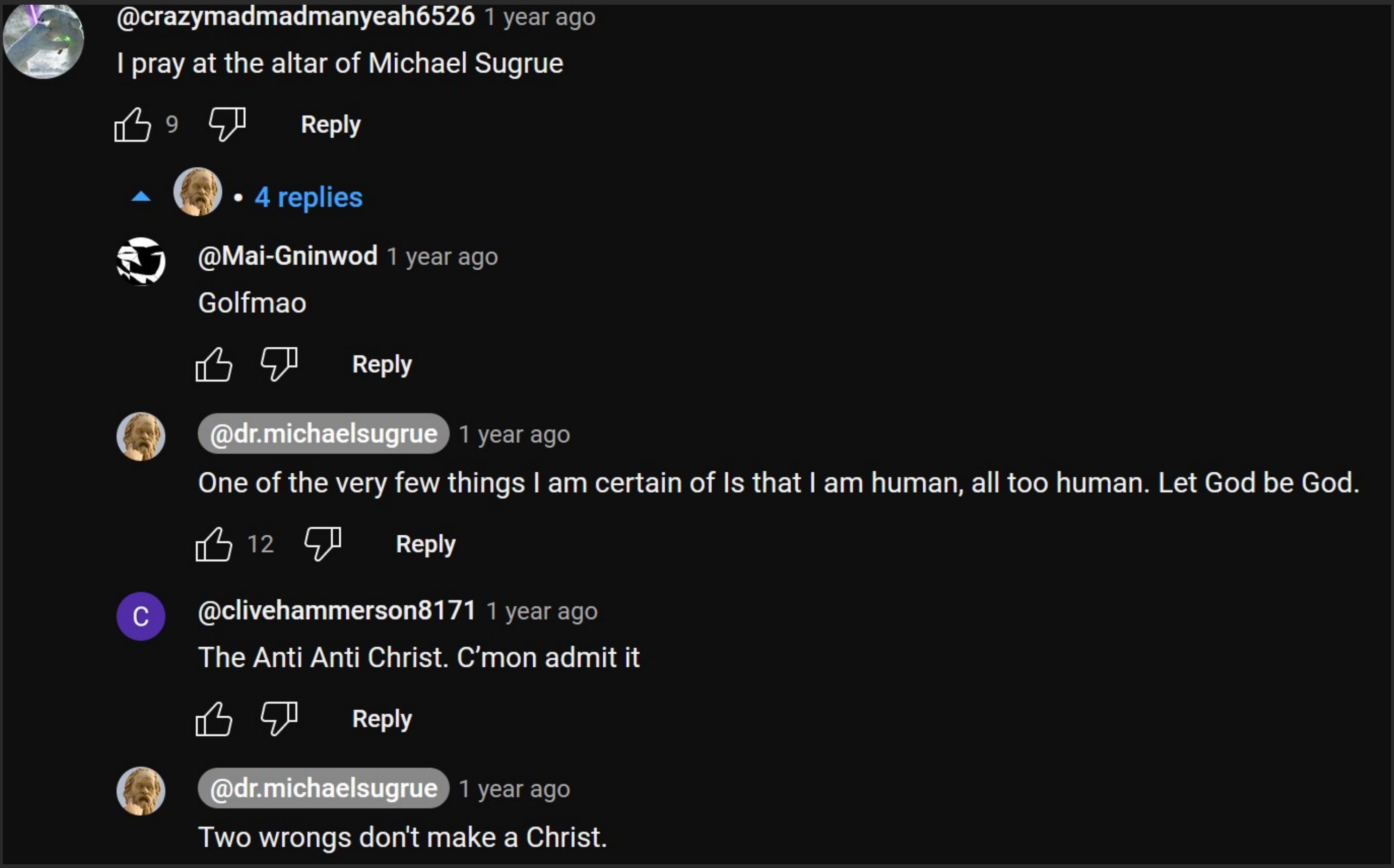


@bishop7954 1 year ago

Thank you for the continued uploads Dr Sugrue.. I'd like to know if you are currently working on anything & if you'll be releasing it to the public. I'm interested in hearing where your thoughts are now.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

If my health allows, in September I will return to writing "History Lessons", a history of the world.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@crazymadmadmanyeah6526 1 year ago

I pray at the altar of Michael Sugrue

@Mai-Gninwod 1 year ago

Golfmao

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

One of the very few things I am certain of Is that I am human, all too human. Let God be God.

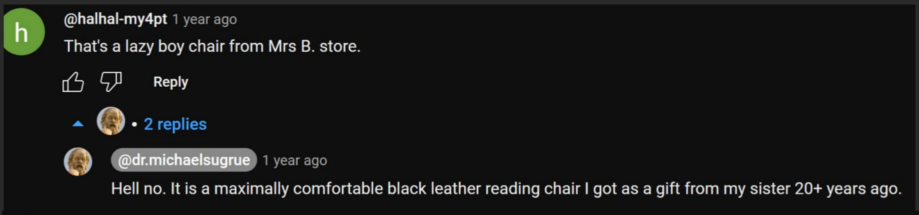
@clivehammerson8171 1 year ago

The Anti Anti Christ. C’mon admit it

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Two wrongs don't make a Christ.

Moby Dick: Bibliotheca Webinar

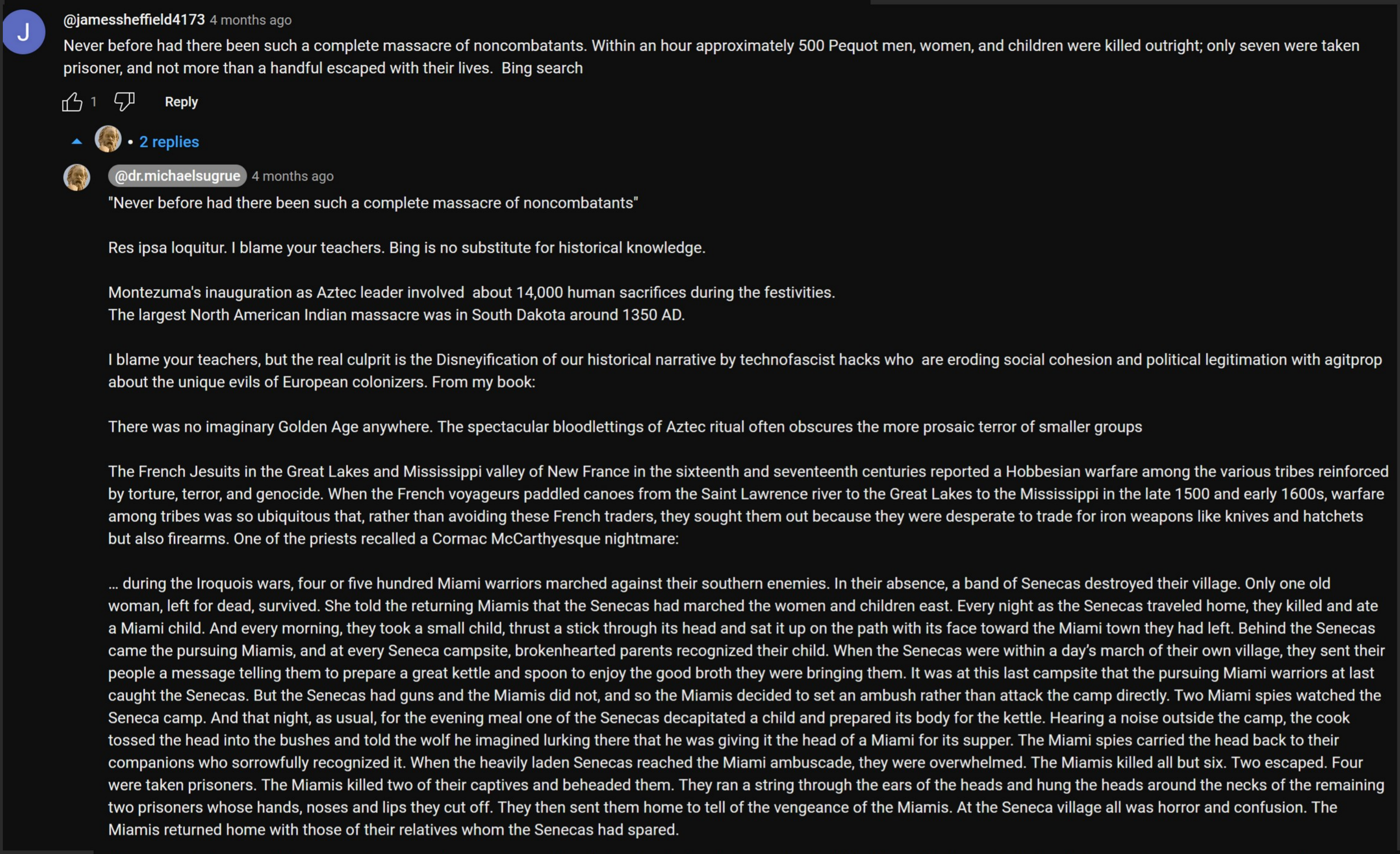


@halhal-my4pt 1 year ago

That's a lazy boy chair from Mrs B. store.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Hell no. It is a maximally comfortable black leather reading chair I got as a gift from my sister 20+ years ago.



@jamessheffield4173 4 months ago

Never before had there been such a complete massacre of noncombatants. Within an hour approximately 500 Pequot men, women, and children were killed outright; only seven were taken prisoner, and not more than a handful escaped with their lives. Bing search

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

"Never before had there been such a complete massacre of noncombatants"

Res ipsa loquitur. I blame your teachers. Bing is no substitute for historical knowledge.

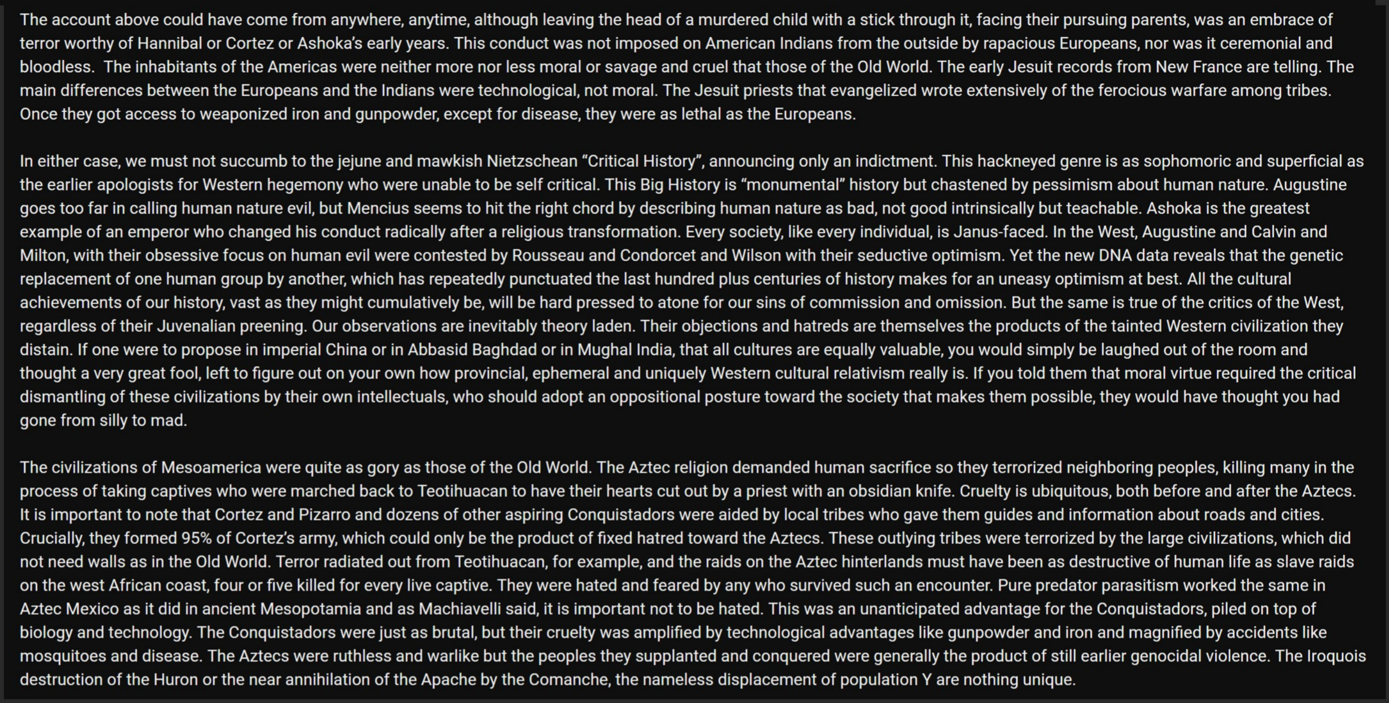
Montezuma's inauguration as Aztec leader involved about 14,000 human sacrifices during the festivities.
The largest North American Indian massacre was in South Dakota around 1350 AD.

I blame your teachers, but the real culprit is the Disneyification of our historical narrative by technofascist hacks who are eroding social cohesion and political legitimation with agitprop about the unique evils of European colonizers. From my book:

There was no imaginary Golden Age anywhere. The spectacular bloodlettings of Aztec ritual often obscures the more prosaic terror of smaller groups

The French Jesuits in the Great Lakes and Mississippi valley of New France in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reported a Hobbesian warfare among the various tribes reinforced by torture, terror, and genocide. When the French voyageurs paddled canoes from the Saint Lawrence river to the Great Lakes to the Mississippi in the late 1500 and early 1600s, warfare among tribes was so ubiquitous that, rather than avoiding these French traders, they sought them out because they were desperate to trade for iron weapons like knives and hatchets but also firearms. One of the priests recalled a Cormac McCarthyesque nightmare:

… during the Iroquois wars, four or five hundred Miami warriors marched against their southern enemies. In their absence, a band of Senecas destroyed their village. Only one old woman, left for dead, survived. She told the returning Miamis that the Senecas had marched the women and children east. Every night as the Senecas traveled home, they killed and ate a Miami child. And every morning, they took a small child, thrust a stick through its head and sat it up on the path with its face toward the Miami town they had left. Behind the Senecas came the pursuing Miamis, and at every Seneca campsite, brokenhearted parents recognized their child. When the Senecas were within a day's march of their own village, they sent their people a message telling them to prepare a great kettle and spoon to enjoy the good broth they were bringing them. It was at this last campsite that the pursuing Miami warriors at last caught the Senecas. But the Senecas had guns and the Miamis did not, and so the Miamis decided to set an ambush rather than attack the camp directly. Two Miami spies watched the Seneca camp. And that night, as usual, for the evening meal one of the Senecas decapitated a child and prepared its body for the kettle. Hearing a noise outside the camp, the cook tossed the head into the bushes and told the wolf he imagined lurking there that he was giving it the head of a Miami for its supper. The Miami spies carried the head back to their companions who sorrowfully recognized it. When the heavily laden Senecas reached the Miami ambuscade, they were overwhelmed. The Miamis killed all but six. Two escaped. Four were taken prisoners. The Miamis killed two of their captives and beheaded them. They ran a string through the ears of the heads and hung the heads around the necks of the remaining two prisoners whose hands, noses and lips they cut off. They then sent them home to tell of the vengeance of the Miamis. At the Seneca village all was horror and confusion. The Miamis returned home with those of their relatives whom the Senecas had spared.

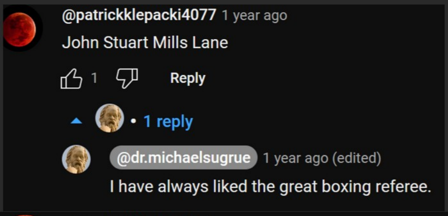


The account above could have come from anywhere, anytime, although leaving the head of a murdered child with a stick through it, facing their pursuing parents, was an embrace of terror worthy of Hannibal or Cortez or Ashoka's early years. This conduct was not imposed on American Indians from the outside by rapacious Europeans, nor was it ceremonial and bloodless. The inhabitants of the Americas were neither more nor less moral or savage and cruel that those of the Old World. The early Jesuit records from New France are telling. The main differences between the Europeans and the Indians were technological, not moral. The Jesuit priests that evangelized wrote extensively of the ferocious warfare among tribes. Once they got access to weaponized iron and gunpowder, except for disease, they were as lethal as the Europeans.

In either case, we must not succumb to the jejune and mawkish Nietzschean "Critical History", announcing only an indictment. This hackneyed genre is as sophomoric and superficial as the earlier apologists for Western hegemony who were unable to be self critical. This Big History is "monumental" history but chastened by pessimism about human nature. Augustine goes too far in calling human nature evil, but Mencius seems to hit the right chord by describing human nature as bad, not good intrinsically but teachable. Ashoka is the greatest example of an emperor who changed his conduct radically after a religious transformation. Every society, like every individual, is Janus-faced. In the West, Augustine and Calvin and Milton, with their obsessive focus on human evil were contested by Rousseau and Condorcet and Wilson with their seductive optimism. Yet the new DNA data reveals that the genetic replacement of one human group by another, which has repeatedly punctuated the last hundred plus centuries of history makes for an uneasy optimism at best. All the cultural achievements of our history, vast as they might cumulatively be, will be hard pressed to atone for our sins of commission and omission. But the same is true of the critics of the West, regardless of their Juvenalian preening. Our observations are inevitably theory laden. Their objections and hatreds are themselves the products of the tainted Western civilization they distain. If one were to propose in imperial China or in Abbasid Baghdad or in Mughal India, that all cultures are equally valuable, you would simply be laughed out of the room and thought a very great fool, left to figure out on your own how provincial, ephemeral and uniquely Western cultural relativism really is. If you told them that moral virtue required the critical dismantling of these civilizations by their own intellectuals, who should adopt an oppositional posture toward the society that makes them possible, they would have thought you had gone from silly to mad.

The civilizations of Mesoamerica were quite as gory as those of the Old World. The Aztec religion demanded human sacrifice so they terrorized neighboring peoples, killing many in the process of taking captives who were marched back to Teotihuacan to have their hearts cut out by a priest with an obsidian knife. Cruelty is ubiquitous, both before and after the Aztecs. It is important to note that Cortez and Pizarro and dozens of other aspiring Conquistadors were aided by local tribes who gave them guides and information about roads and cities. Crucially, they formed 95% of Cortez's army, which could only be the product of fixed hatred toward the Aztecs. These outlying tribes were terrorized by the large civilizations, which did not need walls as in the Old World. Terror radiated out from Teotihuacan, for example, and the raids on the Aztec hinterlands must have been as destructive of human life as slave raids on the west African coast, four or five killed for every live captive. They were hated and feared by any who survived such an encounter. Pure predator parasitism worked the same in Aztec Mexico as it did in ancient Mesopotamia and as Machiavelli said, it is important not to be hated. This was an unanticipated advantage for the Conquistadors, piled on top of biology and technology. The Conquistadors were just as brutal, but their cruelty was amplified by technological advantages like gunpowder and iron and magnified by accidents like mosquitoes and disease. The Aztecs were ruthless and warlike but the peoples they supplanted and conquered were generally the product of still earlier genocidal violence. The Iroquois destruction of the Huron or the near annihilation of the Apache by the Comanche, the nameless displacement of population Y are nothing unique.

Utilitarianism: Bibliotheca Webinar

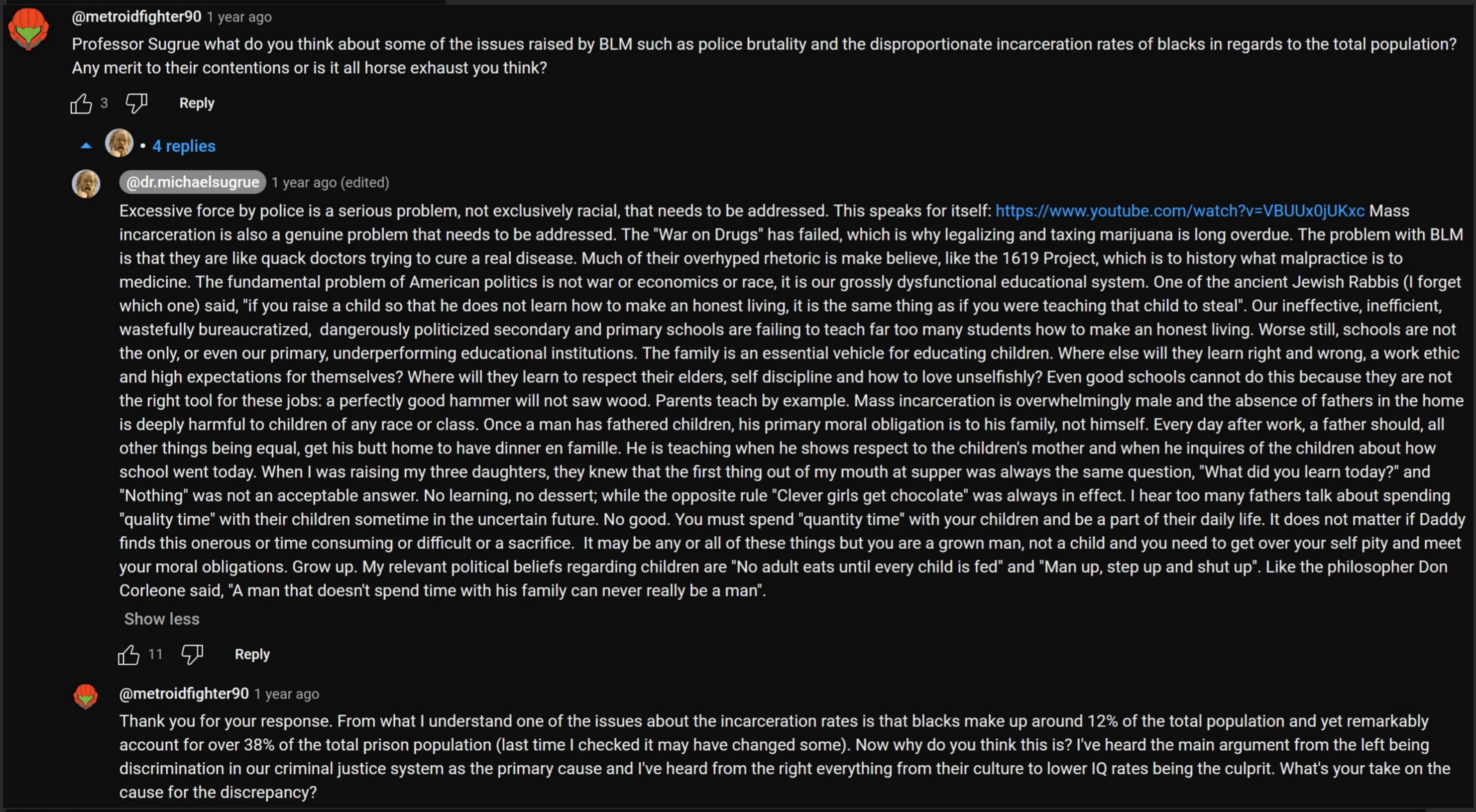


@patrickklepacki4077 1 year ago

John Stuart Mills Lane

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I have always liked the great boxing referee.



@metroidfighter90 1 year ago

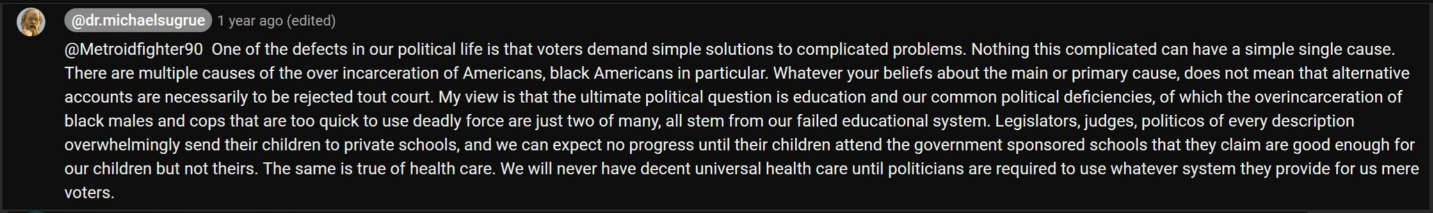
Professor Sugrue what do you think about some of the issues raised by BLM such as police brutality and the disproportionate incarceration rates of blacks in regards to the total population? Any merit to their contentions or is it all horse exhaust you think?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Excessive force by police is a serious problem, not exclusively racial, that needs to be addressed. This speaks for itself: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBUUx0jUKxc Mass incarceration is also a genuine problem that needs to be addressed. The "War on Drugs" has failed, which is why legalizing and taxing marijuana is long overdue. The problem with BLM is that they are like quack doctors trying to cure a real disease. Much of their overhyped rhetoric is make believe, like the 1619 Project, which is to history what malpractice is to medicine. The fundamental problem of American politics is not war or economics or race, it is our grossly dysfunctional educational system. One of the ancient Jewish Rabbis (I forget which one) said, "if you raise a child so that he does not learn how to make an honest living, it is the same thing as if you were teaching that child to steal". Our ineffective, inefficient, wastefully bureaucratized, dangerously politicized secondary and primary schools are failing to teach far too many students how to make an honest living. Worse still, schools are not the only, or even our primary, underperforming educational institutions. The family is an essential vehicle for educating children. Where else will they learn right and wrong, a work ethic and high expectations for themselves? Where will they learn to respect their elders, self discipline and how to love unselfishly? Even good schools cannot do this because they are not the right tool for these jobs: a perfectly good hammer will not saw wood. Parents teach by example. Mass incarceration is overwhelmingly male and the absence of fathers in the home is deeply harmful to children of any race or class. Once a man has fathered children, his primary moral obligation is to his family, not himself. Every day after work, a father should, all other things being equal, get his butt home to have dinner en famille. He is teaching when he shows respect to the children's mother and when he inquires of the children about how school went today. When I was raising my three daughters, they knew that the first thing out of my mouth at supper was always the same question, "What did you learn today?" and "Nothing" was not an acceptable answer. No learning, no dessert; while the opposite rule "Clever girls get chocolate" was always in effect. I hear too many fathers talk about spending "quality time" with their children sometime in the uncertain future. No good. You must spend "quantity time" with your children and be a part of their daily life. It does not matter if Daddy finds this onerous or time consuming or difficult or a sacrifice. It may be any or all of these things but you are a grown man, not a child and you need to get over your self pity and meet your moral obligations. Grow up. My relevant political beliefs regarding children are "No adult eats until every child is fed" and "Man up, step up and shut up". Like the philosopher Don Corleone said, "A man that doesn't spend time with his family can never really be a man".

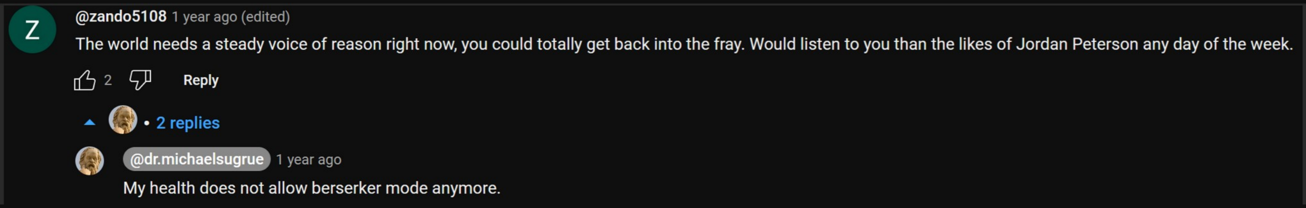
@metroidfighter90 1 year ago

Thank you for your response. From what I understand one of the issues about the incarceration rates is that blacks make up around 12% of the total population and yet remarkably account for over 38% of the total prison population (last time I checked it may have changed some). Now why do you think this is? I've heard the main argument from the left being discrimination in our criminal justice system as the primary cause and I've heard from the right everything from their culture to lower IQ rates being the culprit. What's your take on the cause for the discrepancy?



@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

@Metroidfighter90 One of the defects in our political life is that voters demand simple solutions to complicated problems. Nothing this complicated can have a simple single cause. There are multiple causes of the over incarceration of Americans, black Americans in particular. Whatever your beliefs about the main or primary cause, does not mean that alternative accounts are necessarily to be rejected tout court. My view is that the ultimate political question is education and our common political deficiencies, of which the overincarceration of black males and cops that are too quick to use deadly force are just two of many, all stem from our failed educational system. Legislators, judges, politicos of every description overwhelmingly send their children to private schools, and we can expect no progress until their children attend the government sponsored schools that they claim are good enough for our children but not theirs. The same is true of health care. We will never have decent universal health care until politicians are required to use whatever system they provide for us mere voters.

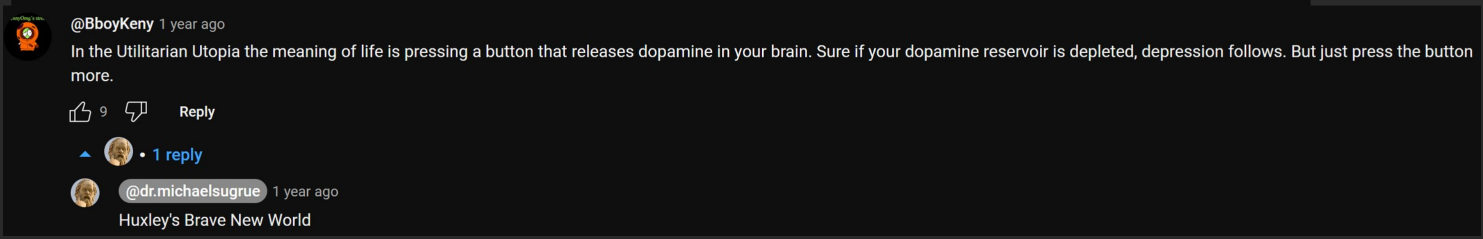


@zando5108 1 year ago (edited)

The world needs a steady voice of reason right now, you could totally get back into the fray. Would listen to you than the likes of Jordan Peterson any day of the week.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

My health does not allow berserker mode anymore.

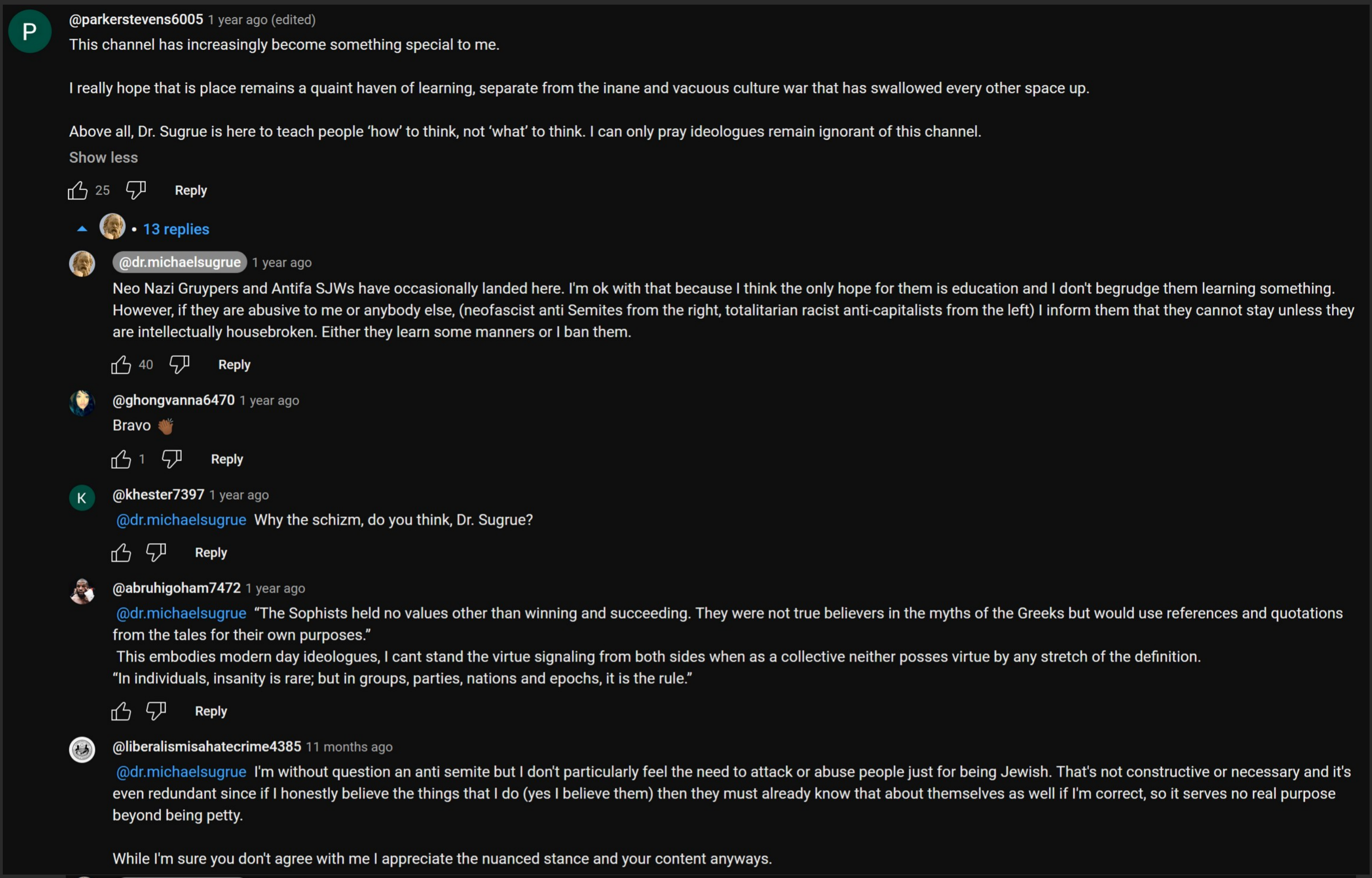


@BboyKeny 1 year ago

In the Utilitarian Utopia the meaning of life is pressing a button that releases dopamine in your brain. Sure if your dopamine reservoir is depleted, depression follows. But just press the button more.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Huxley's Brave New World



@parkerstevens6005 1 year ago (edited)

This channel has increasingly become something special to me.

I really hope that is place remains a quaint haven of learning, separate from the inane and vacuous culture war that has swallowed every other space up.

Above all, Dr. Sugrue is here to teach people 'how' to think, not 'what' to think. I can only pray ideologues remain ignorant of this channel.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Neo Nazi Gruypers and Antifa SJWs have occasionally landed here. I'm ok with that because I think the only hope for them is education and I don't begrudge them learning something. However, if they are abusive to me or anybody else, (neofascist anti Semites from the right, totalitarian racist anti-capitalists from the left) I inform them that they cannot stay unless they are intellectually housebroken. Either they learn some manners or I ban them.

@ghongvanna6470 1 year ago

Bravo 👏

@khester7397 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Why the schizm, do you think, Dr. Sugrue?

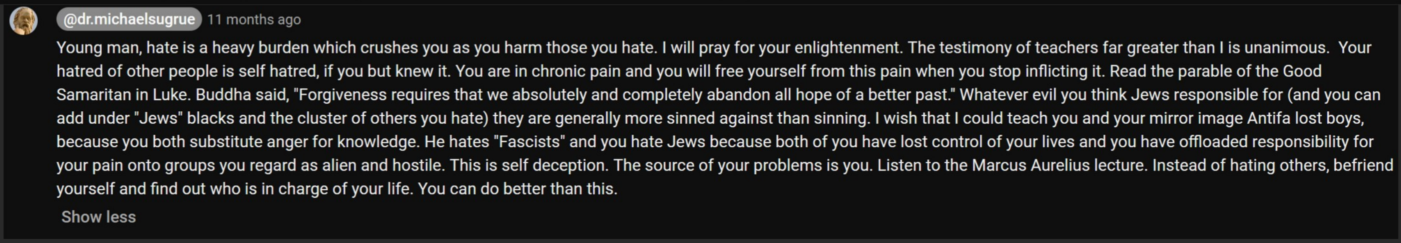
@abruhigoham7472 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue "The Sophists held no values other than winning and succeeding. They were not true believers in the myths of the Greeks but would use references and quotations from the tales for their own purposes."
This embodies modern day ideologues, I cant stand the virtue signaling from both sides when as a collective neither posses virtue by any stretch of the definition.
"In individuals, insanity is rare; but in groups, parties, nations and epochs, it is the rule."

@liberalismisahatecrime4385 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I'm without question an anti semite but I don't particularly feel the need to attack or abuse people just for being Jewish. That's not constructive or necessary and it's even redundant since if I honestly believe the things that I do (yes I believe them) then they must already know that about themselves as well if I'm correct, so it serves no real purpose beyond being petty.

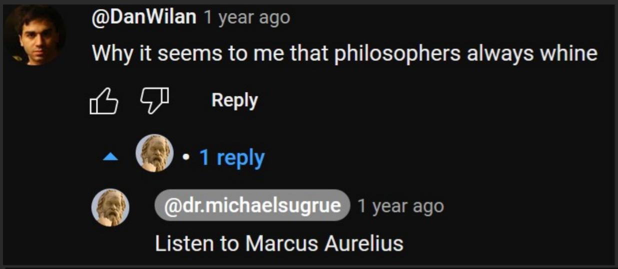
While I'm sure you don't agree with me I appreciate the nuanced stance and your content anyways.



@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Young man, hate is a heavy burden which crushes you as you harm those you hate. I will pray for your enlightenment. The testimony of teachers far greater than I is unanimous. Your hatred of other people is self hatred, if you but knew it. You are in chronic pain and you will free yourself from this pain when you stop inflicting it. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke. Buddha said, "Forgiveness requires that we absolutely and completely abandon all hope of a better past." Whatever evil you think Jews responsible for (and you can add under "Jews" blacks and the cluster of others you hate) they are generally more sinned against than sinning. I wish that I could teach you and your mirror image Antifa lost boys, because you both substitute anger for knowledge. He hates "Fascists" and you hate Jews because both of you have lost control of your lives and you have offloaded responsibility for your pain onto groups you regard as alien and hostile. This is self deception. The source of your problems is you. Listen to the Marcus Aurelius lecture. Instead of hating others, befriend yourself and find out who is in charge of your life. You can do better than this.

Sartre and Heidegger

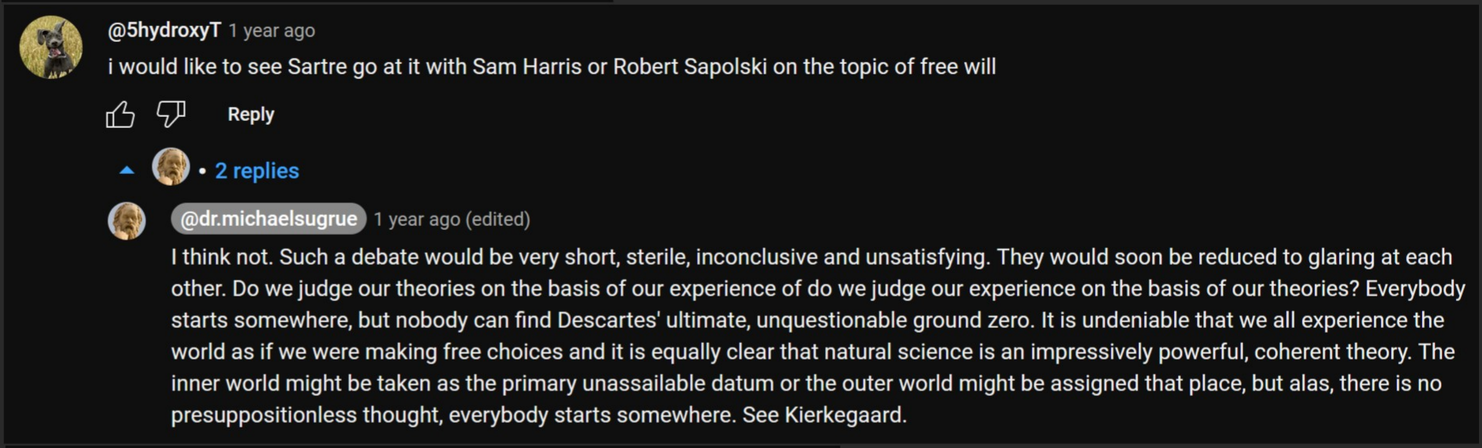


@DanWilan 1 year ago

Why it seems to me that philosophers always whine

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Listen to Marcus Aurelius

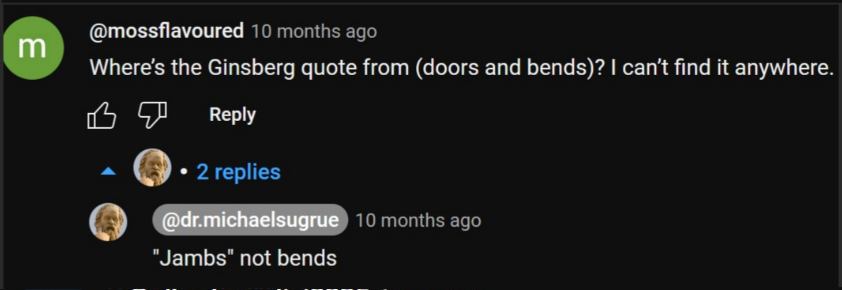


@5hydroxyT 1 year ago

i would like to see Sartre go at it with Sam Harris or Robert Sapolski on the topic of free will

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I think not. Such a debate would be very short, sterile, inconclusive and unsatisfying. They would soon be reduced to glaring at each other. Do we judge our theories on the basis of our experience of do we judge our experience on the basis of our theories? Everybody starts somewhere, but nobody can find Descartes' ultimate, unquestionable ground zero. It is undeniable that we all experience the world as if we were making free choices and it is equally clear that natural science is an impressively powerful, coherent theory. The inner world might be taken as the primary unassailable datum or the outer world might be assigned that place, but alas, there is no presuppositionless thought, everybody starts somewhere. See Kierkegaard.

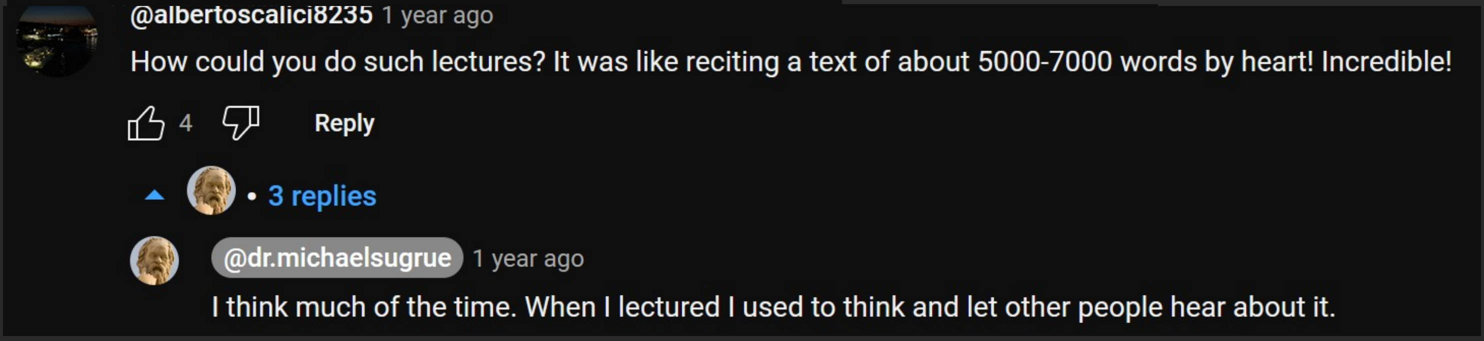


@mossflavoured 10 months ago

Where's the Ginsberg quote from (doors and bends)? I can't find it anywhere.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

"Jambs" not bends

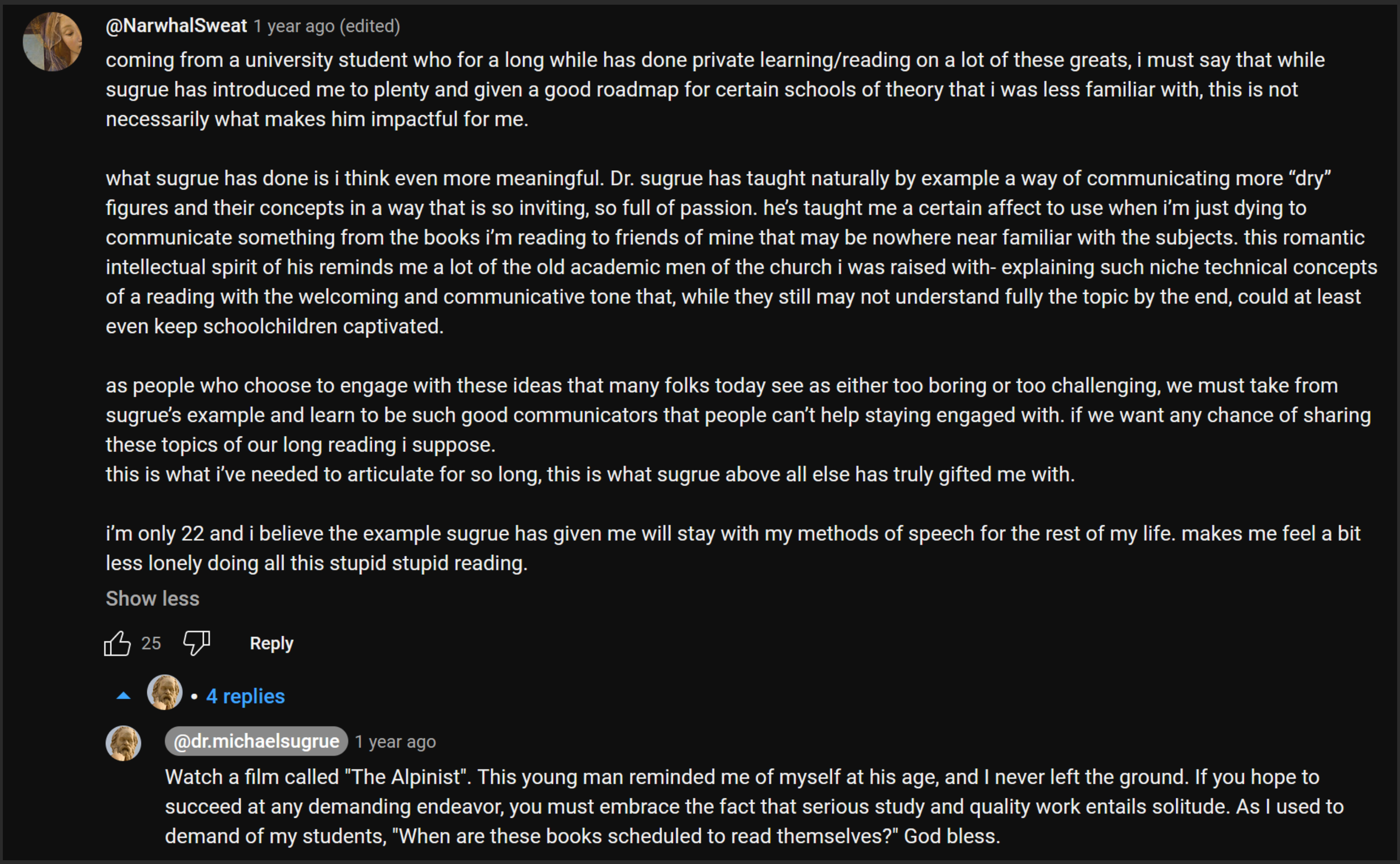


@albertoscalici8235 1 year ago

How could you do such lectures? It was like reciting a text of about 5000-7000 words by heart! Incredible!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I think much of the time. When I lectured I used to think and let other people hear about it.



@NarwhalSweat 1 year ago (edited)

coming from a university student who for a long while has done private learning/reading on a lot of these greats, i must say that while sugrue has introduced me to plenty and given a good roadmap for certain schools of theory that i was less familiar with, this is not necessarily what makes him impactful for me.

what sugrue has done is i think even more meaningful. Dr. sugrue has taught naturally by example a way of communicating more “dry” figures and their concepts in a way that is so inviting, so full of passion. he’s taught me a certain affect to use when i’m just dying to communicate something from the books i’m reading to friends of mine that may be nowhere near familiar with the subjects. this romantic intellectual spirit of his reminds me a lot of the old academic men of the church i was raised with- explaining such niche technical concepts of a reading with the welcoming and communicative tone that, while they still may not understand fully the topic by the end, could at least even keep schoolchildren captivated.

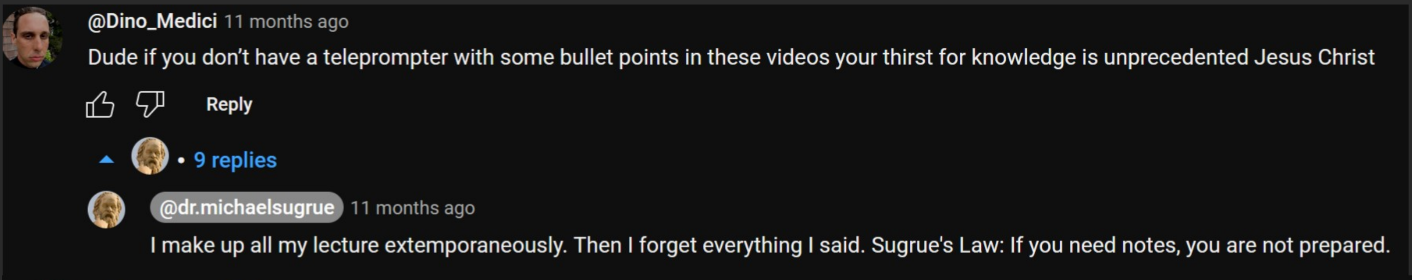
as people who choose to engage with these ideas that many folks today see as either too boring or too challenging, we must take from sugrue’s example and learn to be such good communicators that people can’t help staying engaged with. if we want any chance of sharing these topics of our long reading i suppose.
this is what i’ve needed to articulate for so long, this is what sugrue above all else has truly gifted me with.

i’m only 22 and i believe the example sugrue has given me will stay with my methods of speech for the rest of my life. makes me feel a bit less lonely doing all this stupid stupid reading.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Watch a film called "The Alpinist". This young man reminded me of myself at his age, and I never left the ground. If you hope to succeed at any demanding endeavor, you must embrace the fact that serious study and quality work entails solitude. As I used to demand of my students, "When are these books scheduled to read themselves?" God bless.

Plato's Symposium: The Dialectic of Reason, Love, and Wisdom

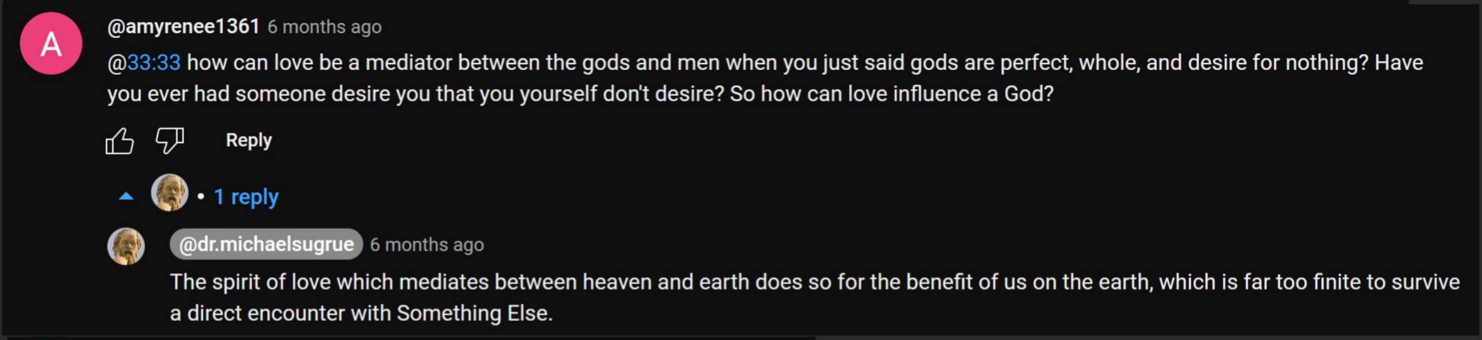


@Dino_Medici 11 months ago

Dude if you don't have a teleprompter with some bullet points in these videos your thirst for knowledge is unprecedented Jesus Christ

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

I make up all my lecture extemporaneously. Then I forget everything I said. Sugrue's Law: If you need notes, you are not prepared.

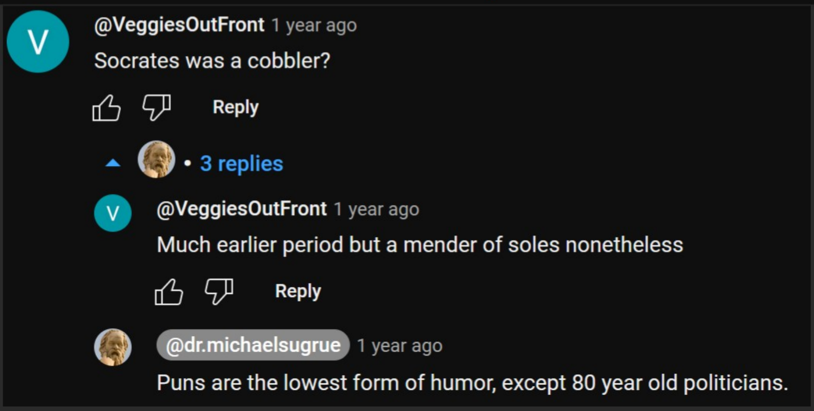


@amyrenee1361 6 months ago

@33:33 how can love be a mediator between the gods and men when you just said gods are perfect, whole, and desire for nothing? Have you ever had someone desire you that you yourself don't desire? So how can love influence a God?

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

The spirit of love which mediates between heaven and earth does so for the benefit of us on the earth, which is far too finite to survive a direct encounter with Something Else.



@VeggiesOutFront 1 year ago

Socrates was a cobbler?

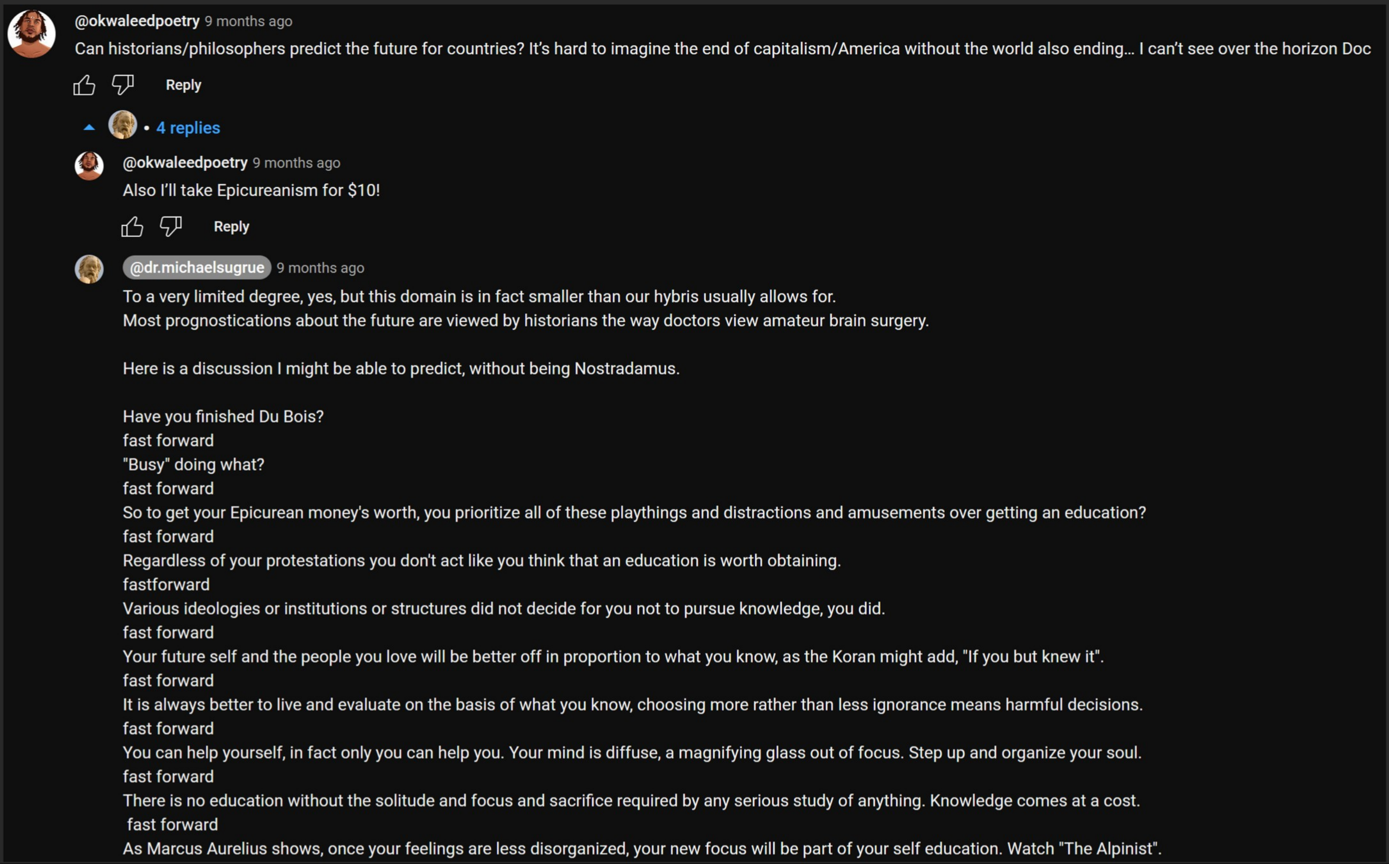
@VeggiesOutFront 1 year ago

Much earlier period but a mender of soles nonetheless

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Puns are the lowest form of humor, except 80 year old politicians.

Polybius and Lucian



@okwaleedpoetry 9 months ago

Can historians/philosophers predict the future for countries? It's hard to imagine the end of capitalism/America without the world also ending… I can't see over the horizon Doc

@okwaleedpoetry 9 months ago

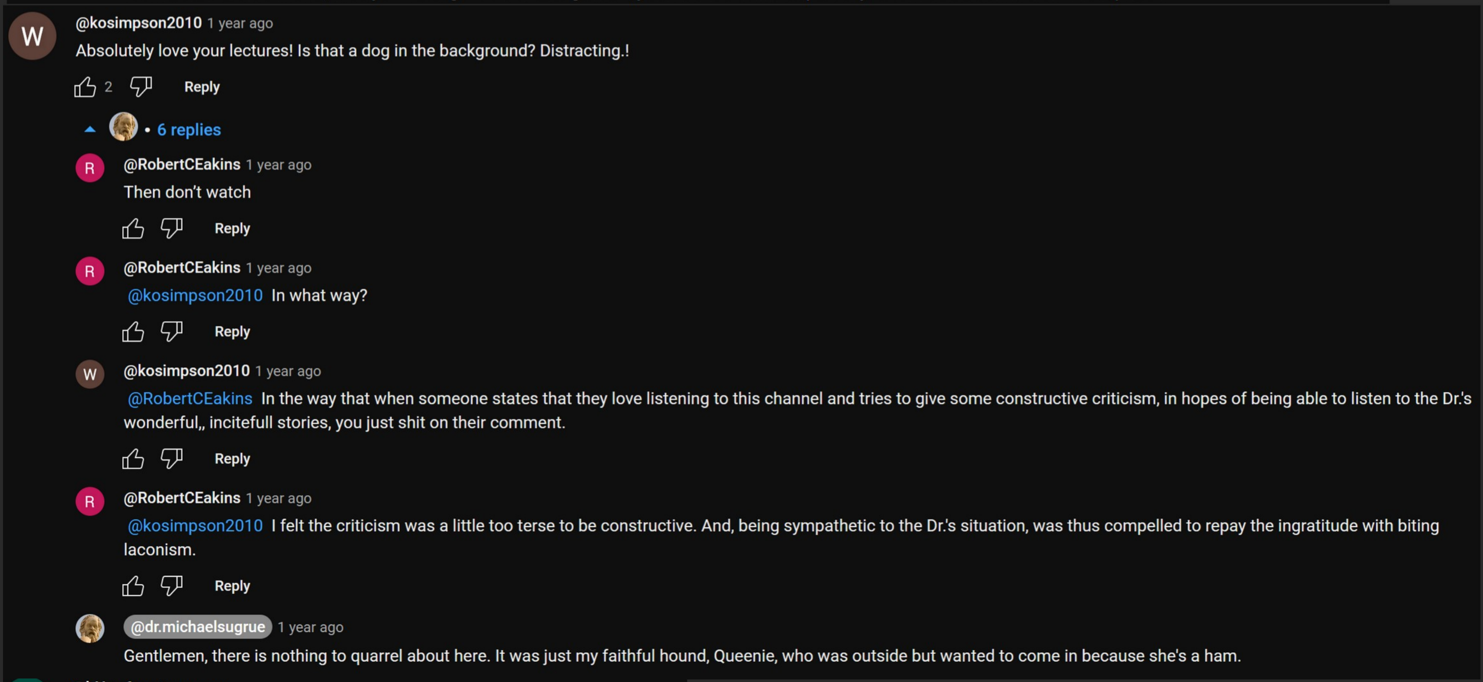
Also I'll take Epicureanism for $10!

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

To a very limited degree, yes, but this domain is in fact smaller than our hybris usually allows for.
Most prognostications about the future are viewed by historians the way doctors view amateur brain surgery.

Here is a discussion I might be able to predict, without being Nostradamus.

Have you finished Du Bois?
fast forward
"Busy" doing what?
fast forward
So to get your Epicurean money's worth, you prioritize all of these playthings and distractions and amusements over getting an education?
fast forward
Regardless of your protestations you don't act like you think that an education is worth obtaining.
fastforward
Various ideologies or institutions or structures did not decide for you not to pursue knowledge, you did.
fast forward
Your future self and the people you love will be better off in proportion to what you know, as the Koran might add, "If you but knew it".
fast forward
It is always better to live and evaluate on the basis of what you know, choosing more rather than less ignorance means harmful decisions.
fast forward
You can help yourself, in fact only you can help you. Your mind is diffuse, a magnifying glass out of focus. Step up and organize your soul.
fast forward
There is no education without the solitude and focus and sacrifice required by any serious study of anything. Knowledge comes at a cost.
fast forward
As Marcus Aurelius shows, once your feelings are less disorganized, your new focus will be part of your self education. Watch "The Alpinist".



@kosimpson2010 1 year ago

Absolutely love your lectures! Is that a dog in the background? Distracting.!

@RobertCEakins 1 year ago

Then don't watch

@RobertCEakins 1 year ago

@kosimpson2010 In what way?

@kosimpson2010 1 year ago

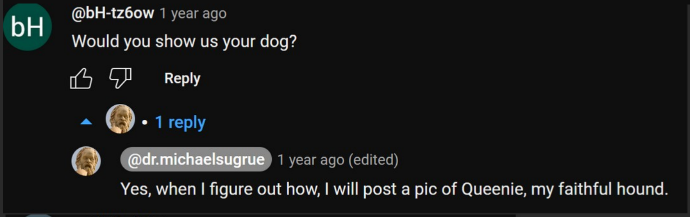
@RobertCEakins In the way that when someone states that they love listening to this channel and tries to give some constructive criticism, in hopes of being able to listen to the Dr.'s wonderful,, incitefull stories, you just shit on their comment.

@RobertCEakins 1 year ago

@kosimpson2010 I felt the criticism was a little too terse to be constructive. And, being sympathetic to the Dr.'s situation, was thus compelled to repay the ingratitude with biting laconism.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Gentlemen, there is nothing to quarrel about here. It was just my faithful hound, Queenie, who was outside but wanted to come in because she's a ham.

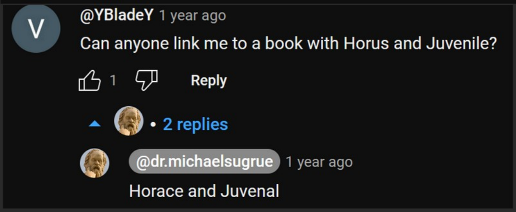


@bH-tz6ow 1 year ago

Would you show us your dog?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Yes, when I figure out how, I will post a pic of Queenie, my faithful hound.

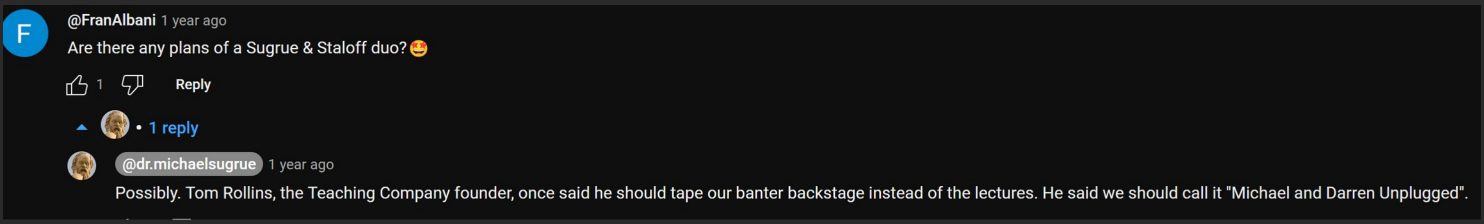


@YBladeY 1 year ago

Can anyone link me to a book with Horus and Juvenile?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Horace and Juvenal



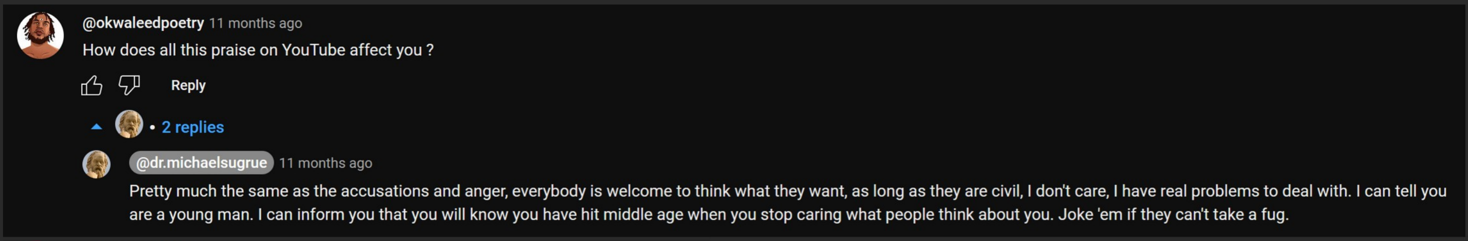
@FranAlbani 1 year ago

Are there any plans of a Sugrue & Staloff duo?🤩

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

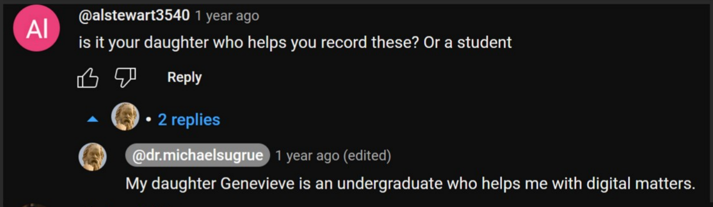
Possibly. Tom Rollins, the Teaching Company founder, once said he should tape our banter backstage instead of the lectures. He said we should call it "Michael and Darren Unplugged".

Aquinas



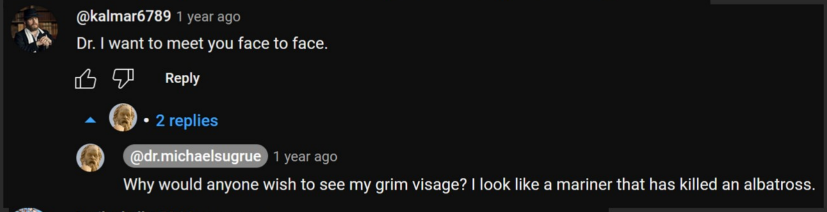
@okwaleedpoetry 11 months ago
How does all this praise on YouTube affect you ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago
Pretty much the same as the accusations and anger, everybody is welcome to think what they want, as long as they are civil, I don't care, I have real problems to deal with. I can tell you are a young man. I can inform you that you will know you have hit middle age when you stop caring what people think about you. Joke 'em if they can't take a fug.



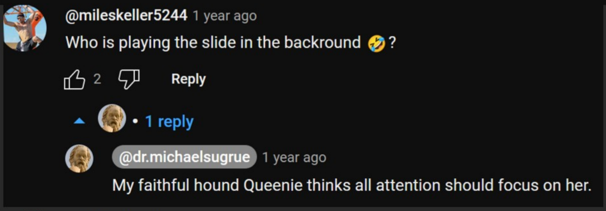
@alstewart3540 1 year ago
is it your daughter who helps you record these? Or a student

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
My daughter Genevieve is an undergraduate who helps me with digital matters.



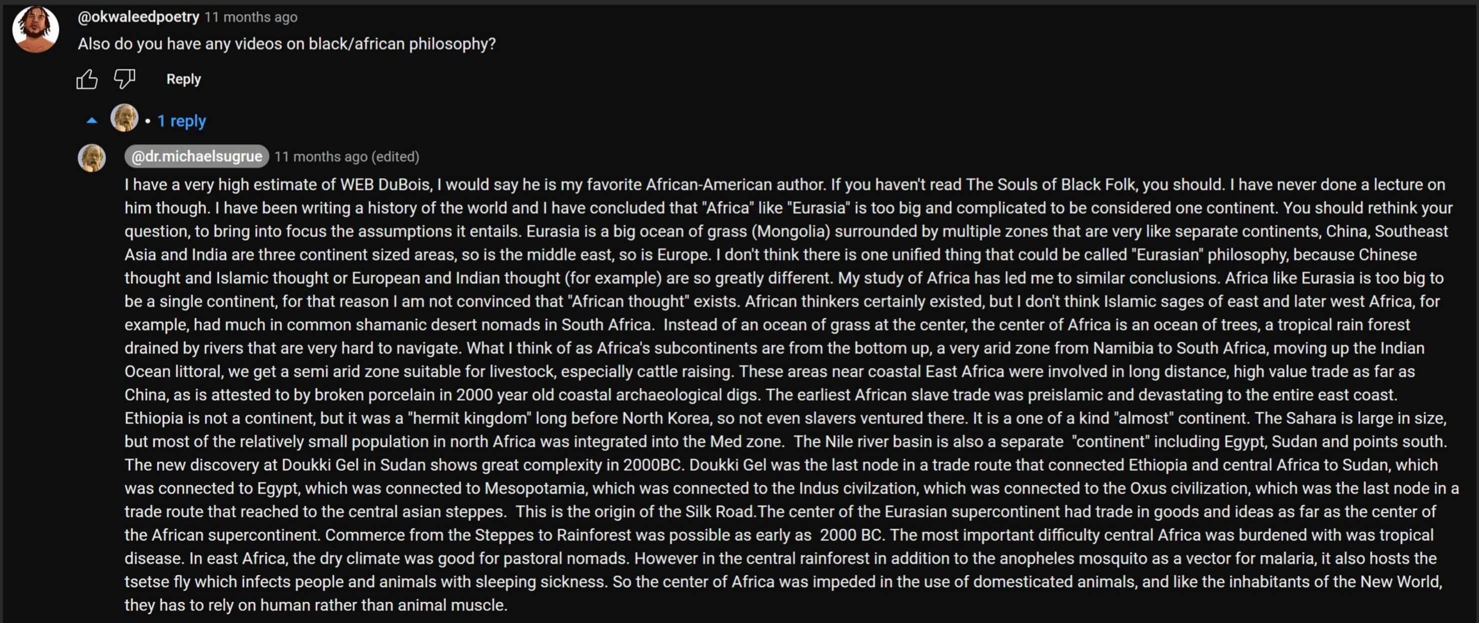
@kalmar6789 1 year ago
Dr. I want to meet you face to face.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Why would anyone wish to see my grim visage? I look like a mariner that has killed an albatross.



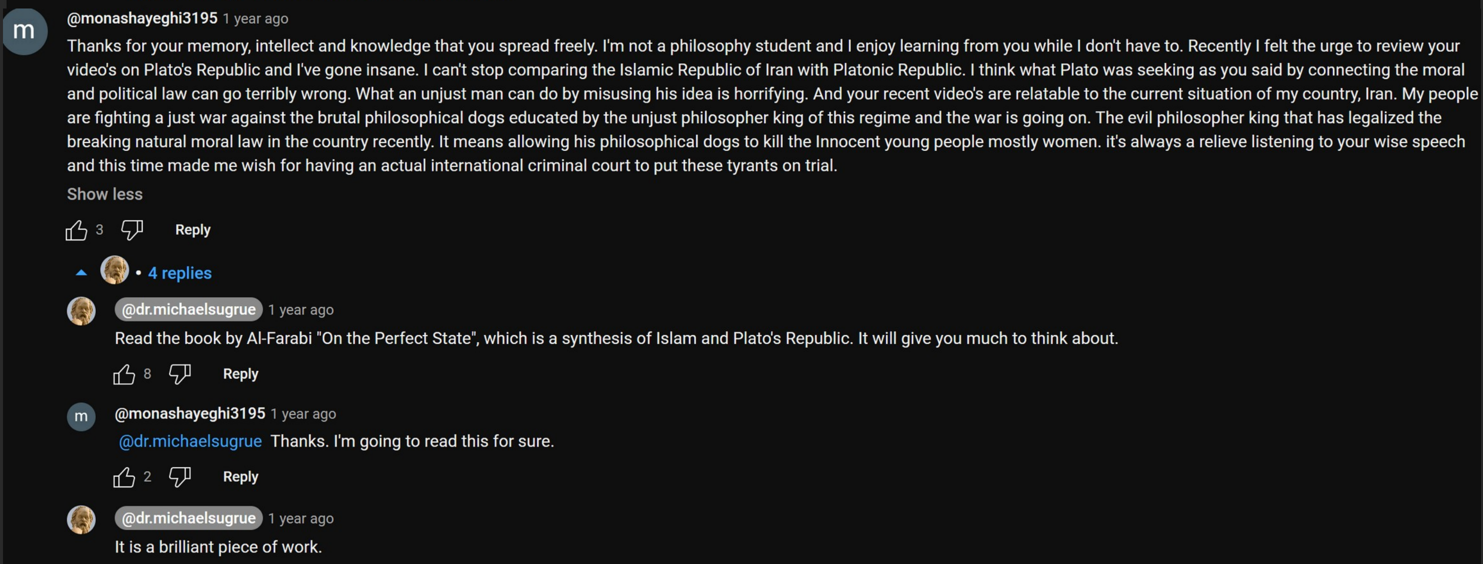
@mileskeller5244 1 year ago
Who is playing the slide in the backround 🤣?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
My faithful hound Queenie thinks all attention should focus on her.



@okwaleedpoetry 11 months ago
Also do you have any videos on black/african philosophy?

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago (edited)
I have a very high estimate of WEB DuBois, I would say he is my favorite African-American author. If you haven't read The Souls of Black Folk, you should. I have never done a lecture on him though. I have been writing a history of the world and I have concluded that "Africa" like "Eurasia" is too big and complicated to be considered one continent. You should rethink your question, to bring into focus the assumptions it entails. Eurasia is a big ocean of grass (Mongolia) surrounded by multiple zones that are very like separate continents, China, Southeast Asia and India are three continent sized areas, so is the middle east, so is Europe. I don't think there is one unified thing that could be called "Eurasian" philosophy, because Chinese thought and Islamic thought or European and Indian thought (for example) are so greatly different. My study of Africa has led me to similar conclusions. Africa like Eurasia is too big to be a single continent, for that reason I am not convinced that "African thought" exists. African thinkers certainly existed, but I don't think Islamic sages of east and later west Africa, for example, had much in common shamanic desert nomads in South Africa. Instead of an ocean of grass at the center, the center of Africa is an ocean of trees, a tropical rain forest drained by rivers that are very hard to navigate. What I think of as Africa's subcontinents are from the bottom up, a very arid zone from Namibia to South Africa, moving up the Indian Ocean littoral, we get a semi arid zone suitable for livestock, especially cattle raising. These areas near coastal East Africa were involved in long distance, high value trade as far as China, as is attested to by broken porcelain in 2000 year old coastal archaeological digs. The earliest African slave trade was preislamic and devastating to the entire east coast. Ethiopia is not a continent, but it was a "hermit kingdom" long before North Korea, so not even slavers ventured there. It is a one of a kind "almost" continent. The Sahara is large in size, but most of the relatively small population in north Africa was integrated into the Med zone. The Nile river basin is also a separate "continent" including Egypt, Sudan and points south. The new discovery at Doukki Gel in Sudan shows great complexity in 2000BC. Doukki Gel was the last node in a trade route that connected Ethiopia and central Africa to Sudan, which was connected to Egypt, which was connected to Mesopotamia, which was connected to the Indus civilzation, which was connected to the Oxus civilization, which was the last node in a trade route that reached to the central asian steppes. This is the origin of the Silk Road.The center of the Eurasian supercontinent had trade in goods and ideas as far as the center of the African supercontinent. Commerce from the Steppes to Rainforest was possible as early as 2000 BC. The most important difficulty central Africa was burdened with was tropical disease. In east Africa, the dry climate was good for pastoral nomads. However in the central rainforest in addition to the anopheles mosquito as a vector for malaria, it also hosts the tsetse fly which infects people and animals with sleeping sickness. So the center of Africa was impeded in the use of domesticated animals, and like the inhabitants of the New World, they has to rely on human rather than animal muscle.



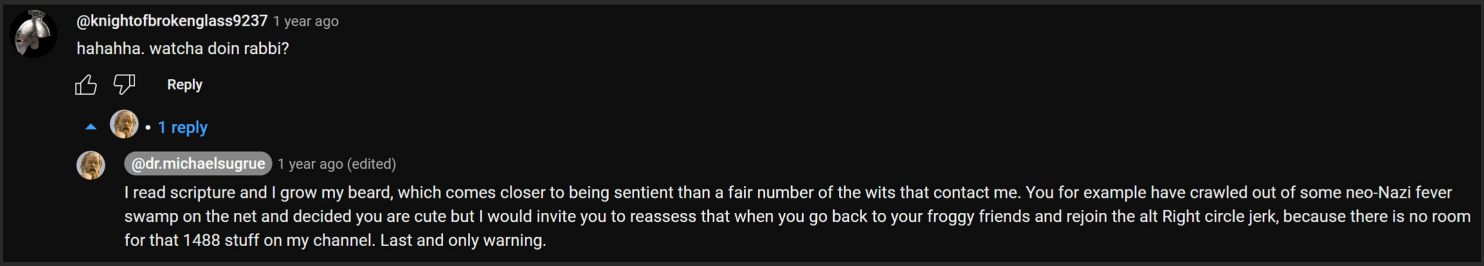
@monashayeghi3195 1 year ago
Thanks for your memory, intellect and knowledge that you spread freely. I'm not a philosophy student and I enjoy learning from you while I don't have to. Recently I felt the urge to review your video's on Plato's Republic and I've gone insane. I can't stop comparing the Islamic Republic of Iran with Platonic Republic. I think what Plato was seeking as you said by connecting the moral and political law can go terribly wrong. What an unjust man can do by misusing his idea is horrifying. And your recent video's are relatable to the current situation of my country, Iran. My people are fighting a just war against the brutal philosophical dogs educated by the unjust philosopher king of this regime and the war is going on. The evil philosopher king that has legalized the breaking natural moral law in the country recently. It means allowing his philosophical dogs to kill the Innocent young people mostly women. it's always a relieve listening to your wise speech and this time made me wish for having an actual international criminal court to put these tyrants on trial.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Read the book by Al-Farabi "On the Perfect State", which is a synthesis of Islam and Plato's Republic. It will give you much to think about.

@monashayeghi3195 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue Thanks. I'm going to read this for sure.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
It is a brilliant piece of work.

Machiavelli



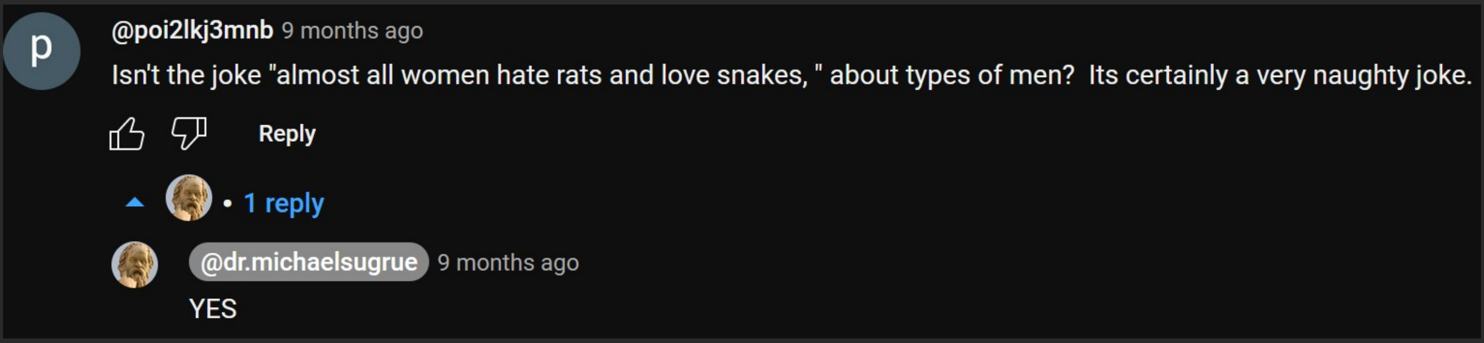
@knightofbrokenglass9237 1 year ago

hahahha. watcha doin rabbi?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I read scripture and I grow my beard, which comes closer to being sentient than a fair number of the wits that contact me. You for example have crawled out of some neo-Nazi fever swamp on the net and decided you are cute but I would invite you to reassess that when you go back to your froggy friends and rejoin the alt Right circle jerk, because there is no room for that 1488 stuff on my channel. Last and only warning.

Castiglione



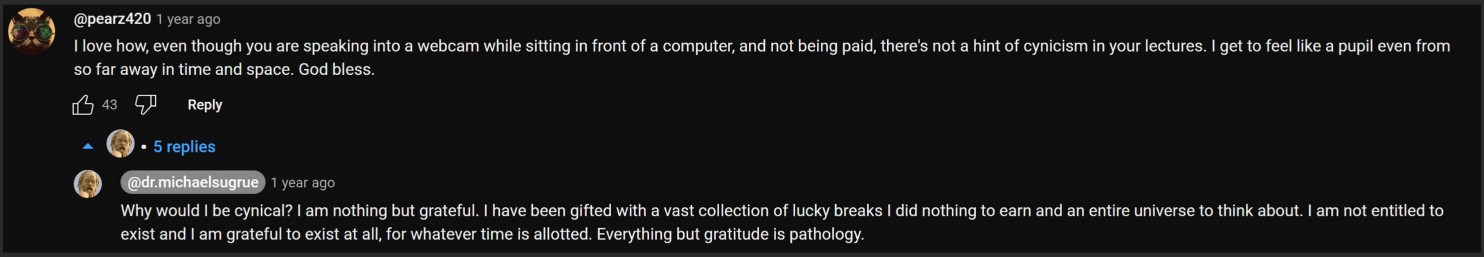
@poi2lkj3mnb 9 months ago

Isn't the joke "almost all women hate rats and love snakes, " about types of men? Its certainly a very naughty joke.

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago

YES

Othello



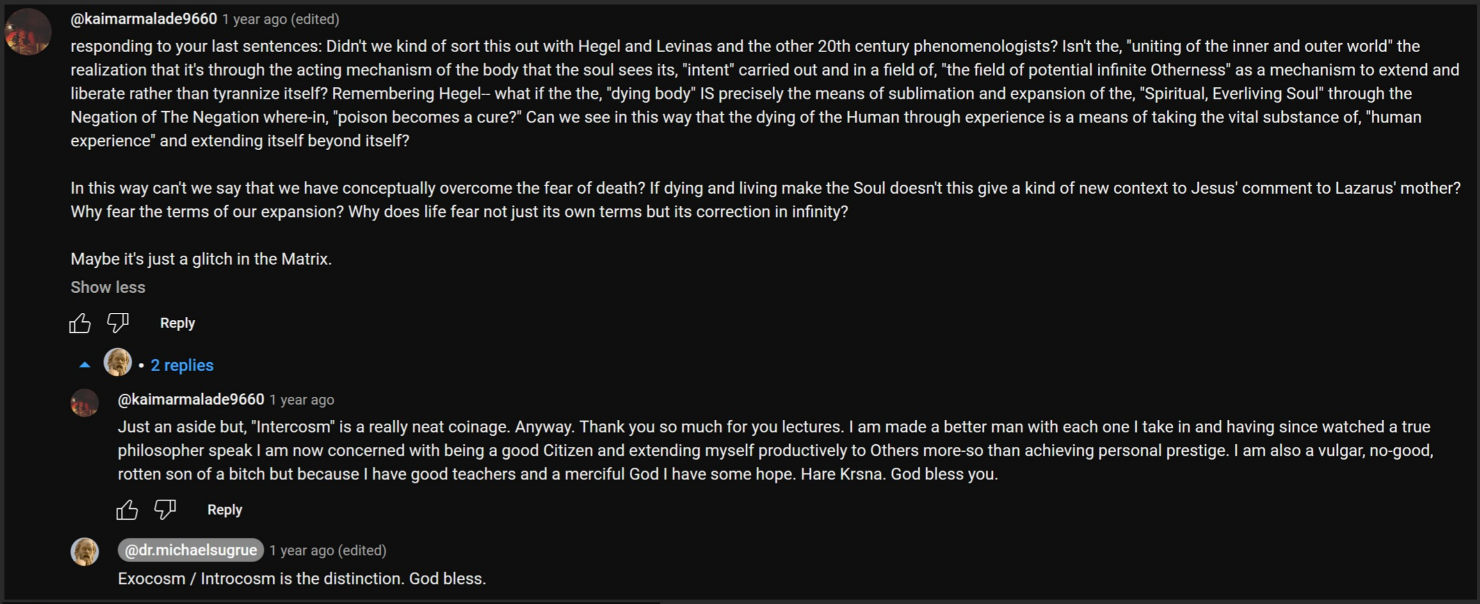
@pearz420 1 year ago

I love how, even though you are speaking into a webcam while sitting in front of a computer, and not being paid, there's not a hint of cynicism in your lectures. I get to feel like a pupil even from so far away in time and space. God bless.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Why would I be cynical? I am nothing but grateful. I have been gifted with a vast collection of lucky breaks I did nothing to earn and an entire universe to think about. I am not entitled to exist and I am grateful to exist at all, for whatever time is allotted. Everything but gratitude is pathology.

Descartes



@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago (edited)

responding to your last sentences: Didn't we kind of sort this out with Hegel and Levinas and the other 20th century phenomenologists? Isn't the, "uniting of the inner and outer world" the realization that it's through the acting mechanism of the body that the soul sees its, "intent" carried out and in a field of, "the field of potential infinite Otherness" as a mechanism to extend and liberate rather than tyrannize itself? Remembering Hegel-- what if the the, "dying body" IS precisely the means of sublimation and expansion of the, "Spiritual, Everliving Soul" through the Negation of The Negation where-in, "poison becomes a cure?" Can we see in this way that the dying of the Human through experience is a means of taking the vital substance of, "human experience" and extending itself beyond itself?

In this way can't we say that we have conceptually overcome the fear of death? If dying and living make the Soul doesn't this give a kind of new context to Jesus' comment to Lazarus' mother? Why fear the terms of our expansion? Why does life fear not just its own terms but its correction in infinity?

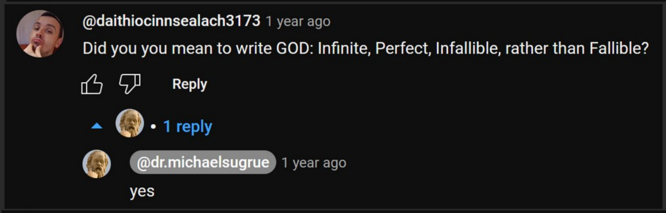
Maybe it's just a glitch in the Matrix.

@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago

Just an aside but, "Intercosm" is a really neat coinage. Anyway. Thank you so much for you lectures. I am made a better man with each one I take in and having since watched a true philosopher speak I am now concerned with being a good Citizen and extending myself productively to Others more-so than achieving personal prestige. I am also a vulgar, no-good, rotten son of a bitch but because I have good teachers and a merciful God I have some hope. Hare Krsna. God bless you.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Exocosm / Introcosm is the distinction. God bless.

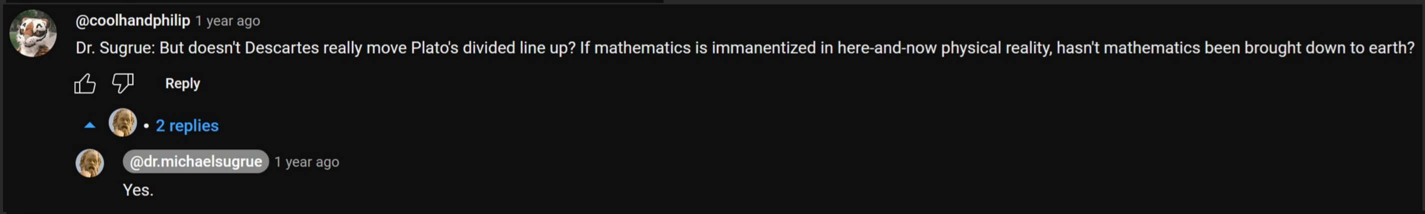


@daithiocinnsealach3173 1 year ago

Did you you mean to write GOD: Infinite, Perfect, Infallible, rather than Fallible?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

yes

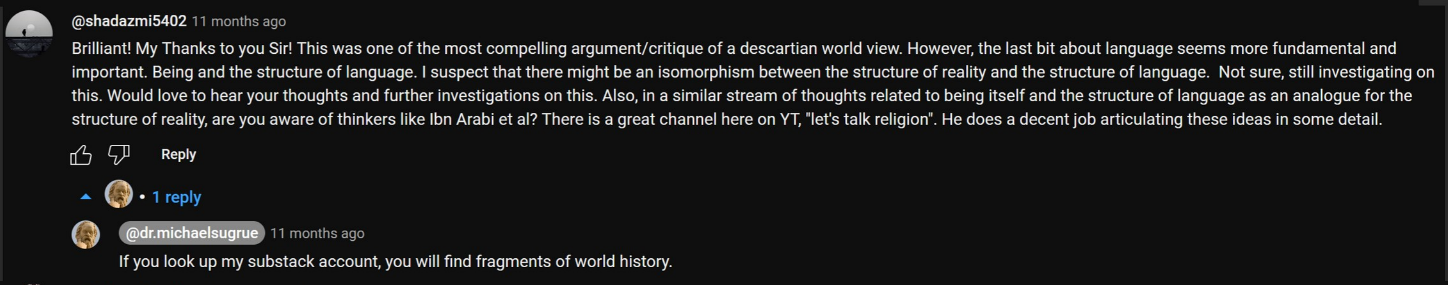


@coolhandphilip 1 year ago

Dr. Sugrue: But doesn't Descartes really move Plato's divided line up? If mathematics is immanentized in here-and-now physical reality, hasn't mathematics been brought down to earth?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes.

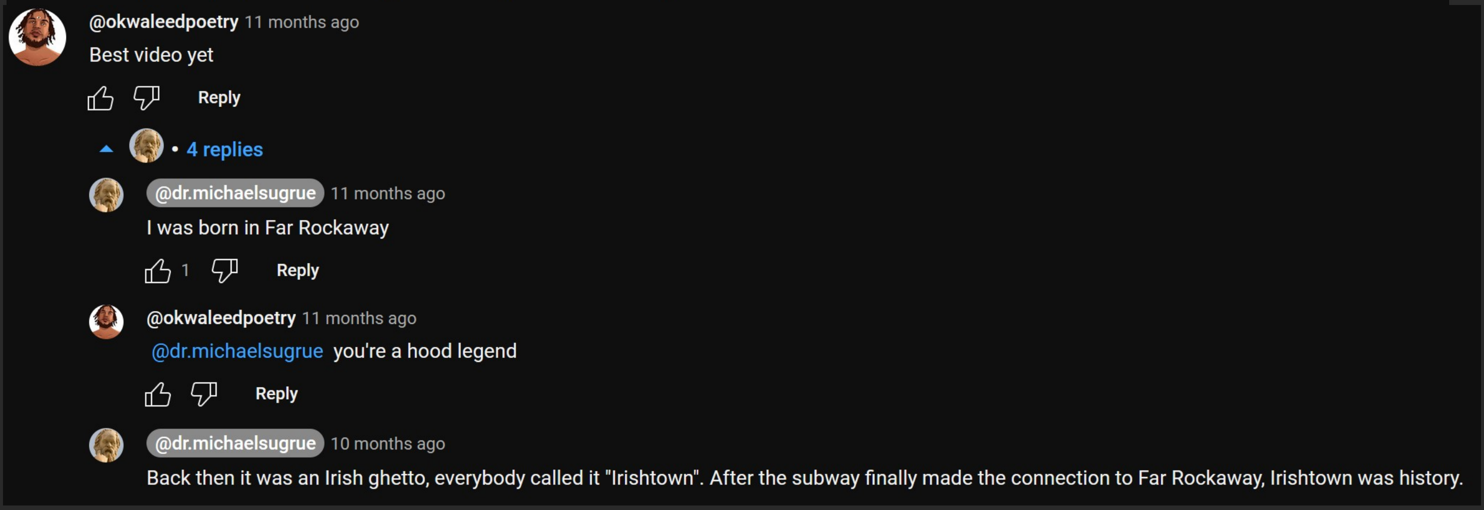


@shadazmi5402 11 months ago

Brilliant! My Thanks to you Sir! This was one of the most compelling argument/critique of a descartian world view. However, the last bit about language seems more fundamental and important. Being and the structure of language. I suspect that there might be an isomorphism between the structure of reality and the structure of language. Not sure, still investigating on this. Would love to hear your thoughts and further investigations on this. Also, in a similar stream of thoughts related to being itself and the structure of language as an analogue for the structure of reality, are you aware of thinkers like Ibn Arabi et al? There is a great channel here on YT, "let's talk religion". He does a decent job articulating these ideas in some detail.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

If you look up my substack account, you will find fragments of world history.



@okwaleedpoetry 11 months ago

Best video yet

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

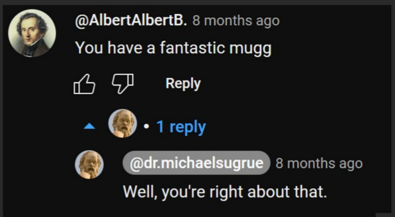
I was born in Far Rockaway

@okwaleedpoetry 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue you're a hood legend

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Back then it was an Irish ghetto, everybody called it "Irishtown". After the subway finally made the connection to Far Rockaway, Irishtown was history.



@AlbertAlbertB. 8 months ago

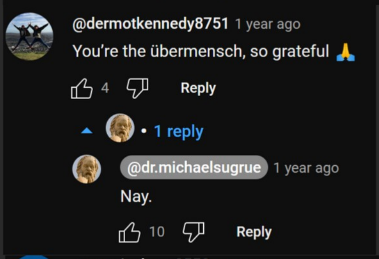
You have a fantastic mugg

Reply

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Well, you're right about that.



@dermotkennedy8751 1 year ago

You're the übermensch, so grateful 🙏

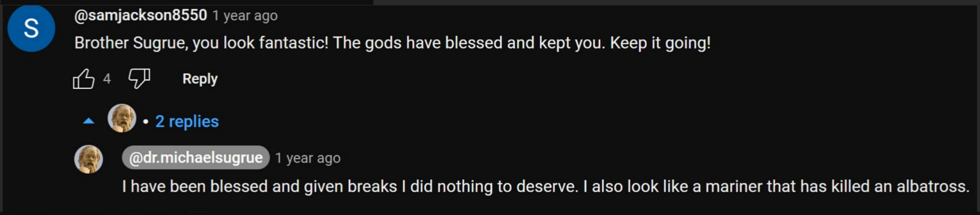
4 Reply

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Nay.

10 Reply



@samjackson8550 1 year ago

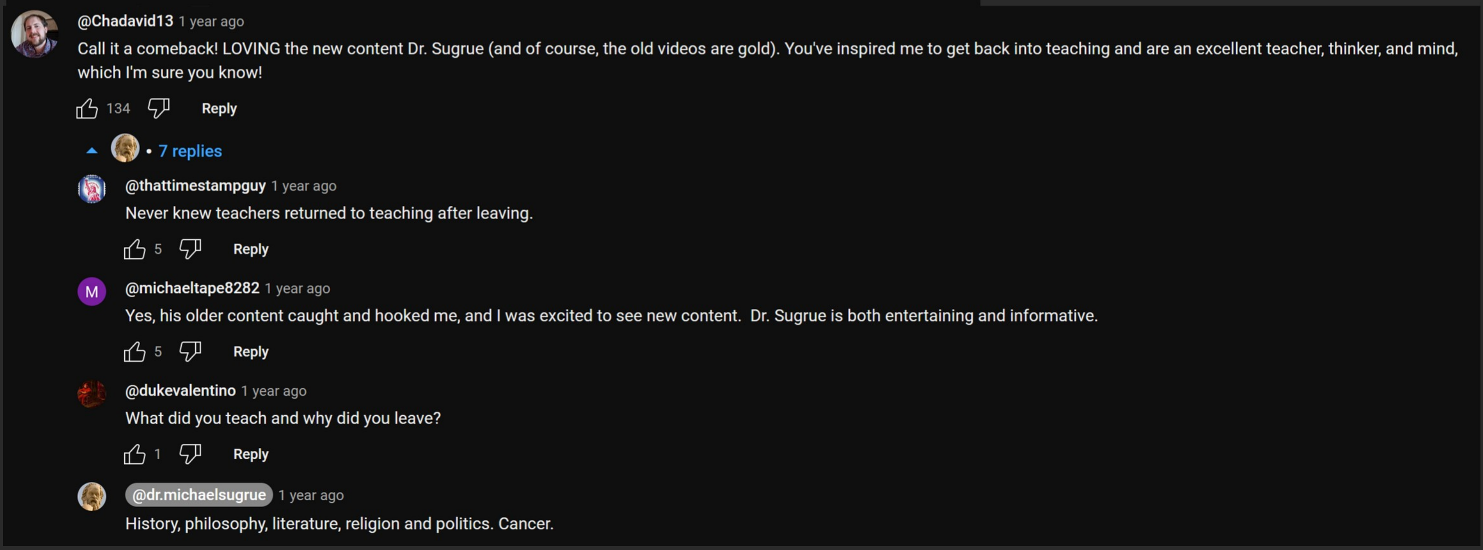
Brother Sugrue, you look fantastic! The gods have blessed and kept you. Keep it going!

4 Reply

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have been blessed and given breaks I did nothing to deserve. I also look like a mariner that has killed an albatross.



@Chadavid13 1 year ago

Call it a comeback! LOVING the new content Dr. Sugrue (and of course, the old videos are gold). You've inspired me to get back into teaching and are an excellent teacher, thinker, and mind, which I'm sure you know!

134 Reply

7 replies

@thattimestampguy 1 year ago

Never knew teachers returned to teaching after leaving.

5 Reply

@michaeltape8282 1 year ago

Yes, his older content caught and hooked me, and I was excited to see new content. Dr. Sugrue is both entertaining and informative.

5 Reply

@dukevalentino 1 year ago

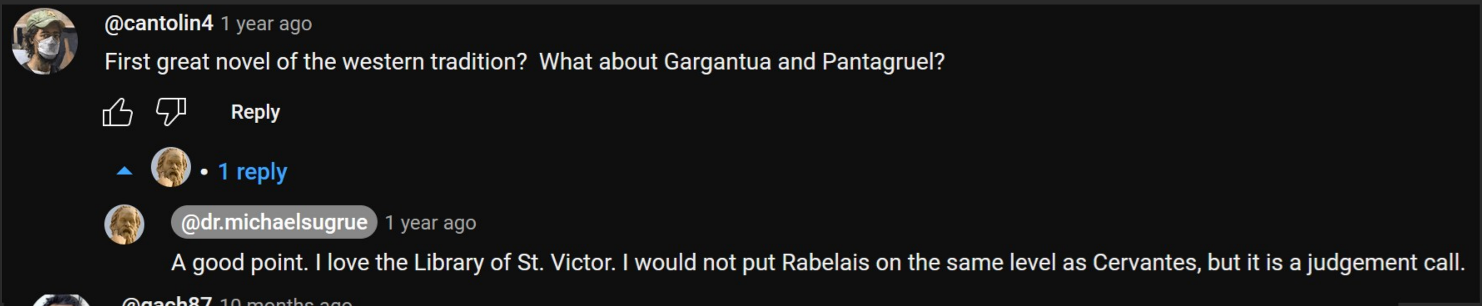
What did you teach and why did you leave?

1 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

History, philosophy, literature, religion and politics. Cancer.

Don Quixote

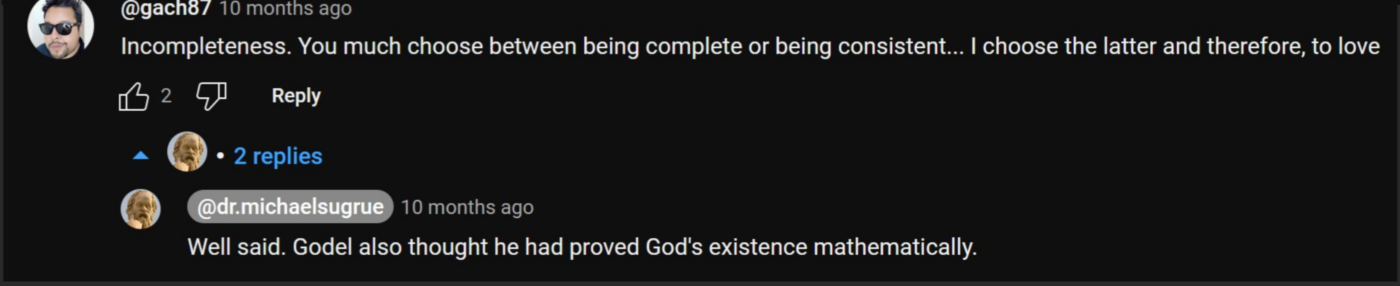


@cantolin4 1 year ago

First great novel of the western tradition? What about Gargantua and Pantagruel?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

A good point. I love the Library of St. Victor. I would not put Rabelais on the same level as Cervantes, but it is a judgement call.



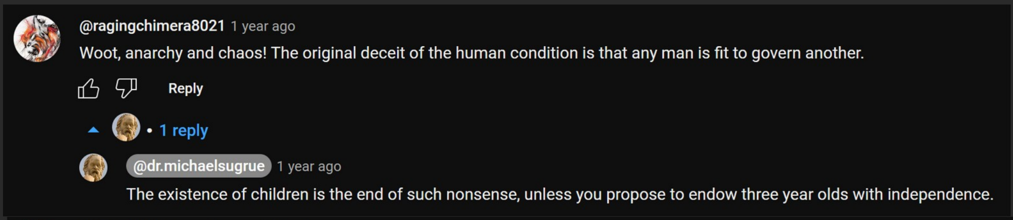
@gach87 10 months ago

Incompleteness. You much choose between being complete or being consistent... I choose the latter and therefore, to love

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Well said. Godel also thought he had proved God's existence mathematically.

Hobbes

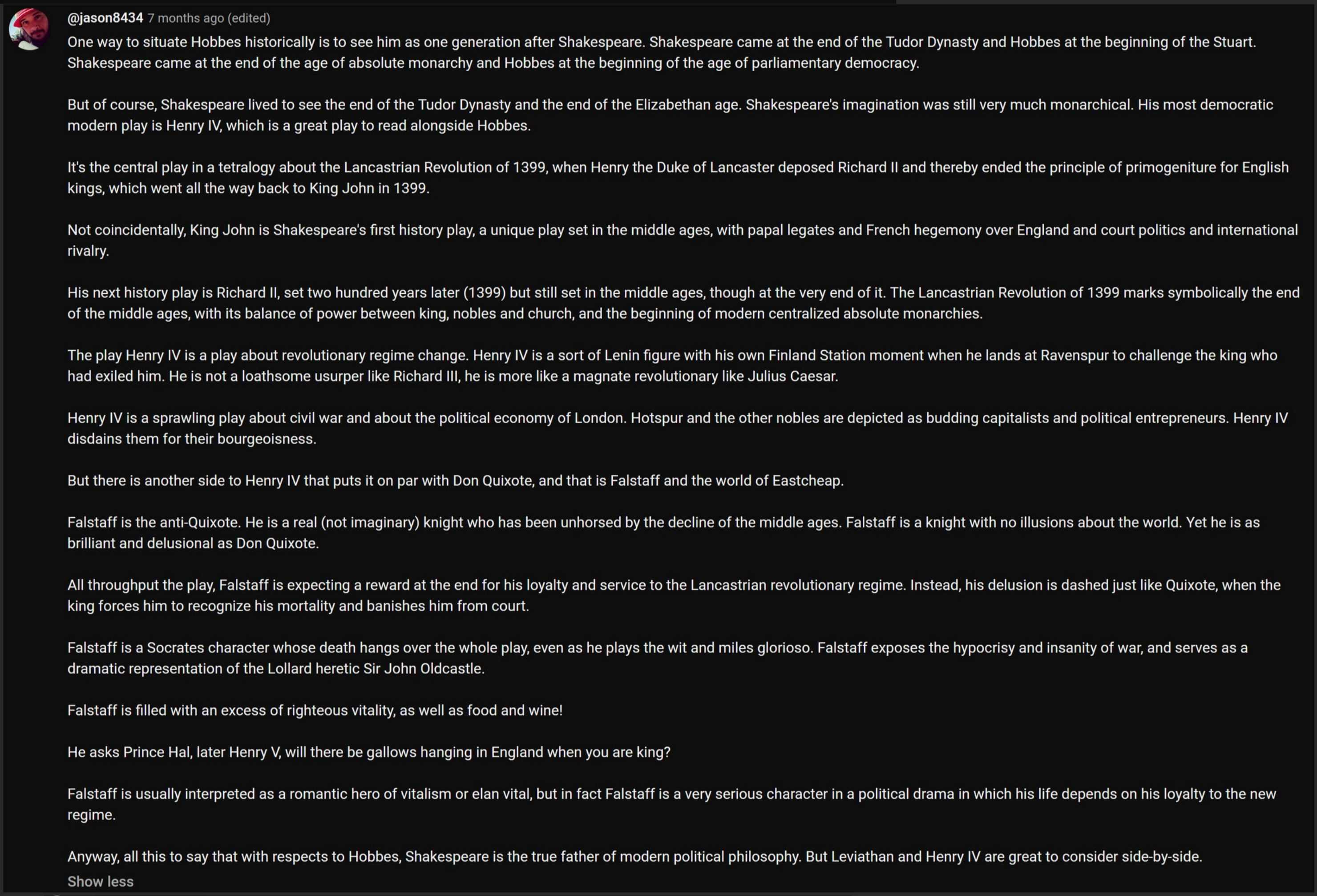


@ragingchimera8021 1 year ago

Woot, anarchy and chaos! The original deceit of the human condition is that any man is fit to govern another.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The existence of children is the end of such nonsense, unless you propose to endow three year olds with independence.



@jason8434 7 months ago (edited)

One way to situate Hobbes historically is to see him as one generation after Shakespeare. Shakespeare came at the end of the Tudor Dynasty and Hobbes at the beginning of the Stuart. Shakespeare came at the end of the age of absolute monarchy and Hobbes at the beginning of the age of parliamentary democracy.

But of course, Shakespeare lived to see the end of the Tudor Dynasty and the end of the Elizabethan age. Shakespeare's imagination was still very much monarchical. His most democratic modern play is Henry IV, which is a great play to read alongside Hobbes.

It's the central play in a tetralogy about the Lancastrian Revolution of 1399, when Henry the Duke of Lancaster deposed Richard II and thereby ended the principle of primogeniture for English kings, which went all the way back to King John in 1399.

Not coincidentally, King John is Shakespeare's first history play, a unique play set in the middle ages, with papal legates and French hegemony over England and court politics and international rivalry.

His next history play is Richard II, set two hundred years later (1399) but still set in the middle ages, though at the very end of it. The Lancastrian Revolution of 1399 marks symbolically the end of the middle ages, with its balance of power between king, nobles and church, and the beginning of modern centralized absolute monarchies.

The play Henry IV is a play about revolutionary regime change. Henry IV is a sort of Lenin figure with his own Finland Station moment when he lands at Ravenspur to challenge the king who had exiled him. He is not a loathsome usurper like Richard III, he is more like a magnate revolutionary like Julius Caesar.

Henry IV is a sprawling play about civil war and about the political economy of London. Hotspur and the other nobles are depicted as budding capitalists and political entrepreneurs. Henry IV disdains them for their bourgeoisness.

But there is another side to Henry IV that puts it on par with Don Quixote, and that is Falstaff and the world of Eastcheap.

Falstaff is the anti-Quixote. He is a real (not imaginary) knight who has been unhorsed by the decline of the middle ages. Falstaff is a knight with no illusions about the world. Yet he is as brilliant and delusional as Don Quixote.

All throughput the play, Falstaff is expecting a reward at the end for his loyalty and service to the Lancastrian revolutionary regime. Instead, his delusion is dashed just like Quixote, when the king forces him to recognize his mortality and banishes him from court.

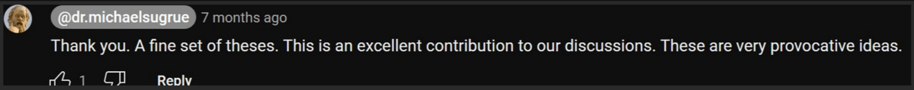
Falstaff is a Socrates character whose death hangs over the whole play, even as he plays the wit and miles glorioso. Falstaff exposes the hypocrisy and insanity of war, and serves as a dramatic representation of the Lollard heretic Sir John Oldcastle.

Falstaff is filled with an excess of righteous vitality, as well as food and wine!

He asks Prince Hal, later Henry V, will there be gallows hanging in England when you are king?

Falstaff is usually interpreted as a romantic hero of vitalism or elan vital, but in fact Falstaff is a very serious character in a political drama in which his life depends on his loyalty to the new regime.

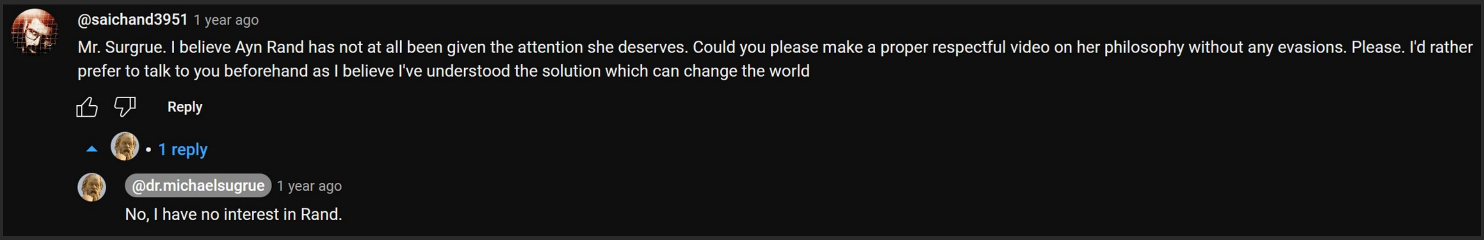
Anyway, all this to say that with respects to Hobbes, Shakespeare is the true father of modern political philosophy. But Leviathan and Henry IV are great to consider side-by-side.



@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Thank you. A fine set of theses. This is an excellent contribution to our discussions. These are very provocative ideas.

Dickens



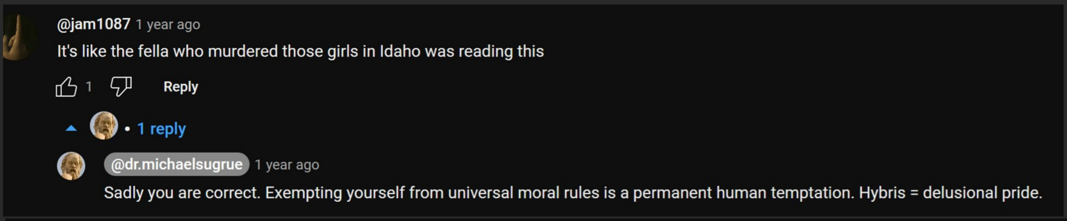
@saichand3951 1 year ago

Mr. Surgrue. I believe Ayn Rand has not at all been given the attention she deserves. Could you please make a proper respectful video on her philosophy without any evasions. Please. I'd rather prefer to talk to you beforehand as I believe I've understood the solution which can change the world

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

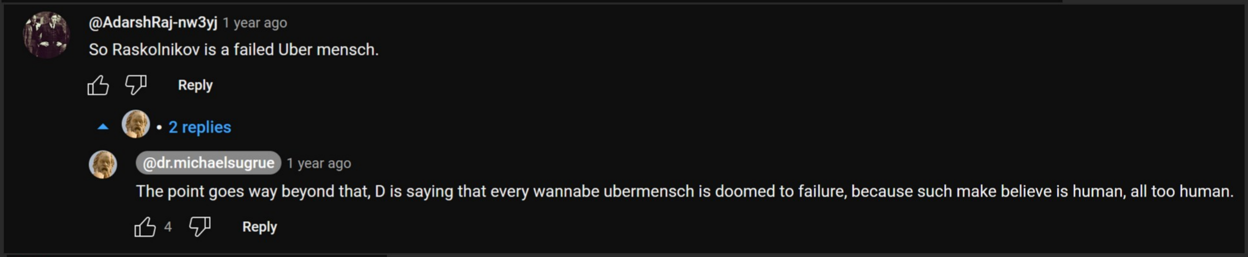
No, I have no interest in Rand.

Dostoyevsky



@jam1087 1 year ago
It's like the fella who murdered those girls in Idaho was reading this

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Sadly you are correct. Exempting yourself from universal moral rules is a permanent human temptation. Hybris = delusional pride.



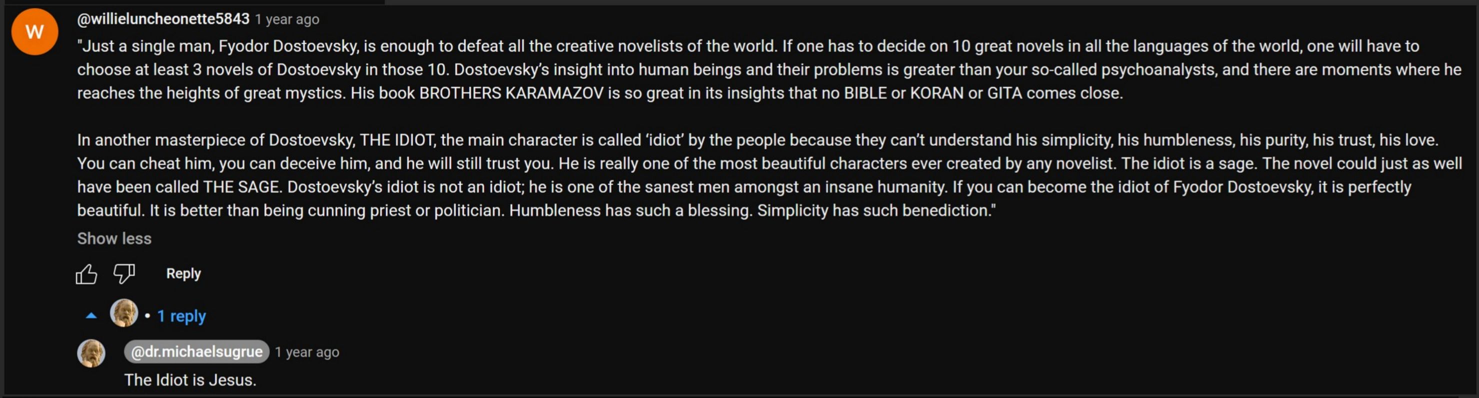
@AdarshRaj-nw3yj 1 year ago
So Raskolnikov is a failed Uber mensch.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
The point goes way beyond that, D is saying that every wannabe ubermensch is doomed to failure, because such make believe is human, all too human.

F
Reply
2 replies

@fortunatomartino9797 1 year ago
Roskolnikov is not Ubermensch material

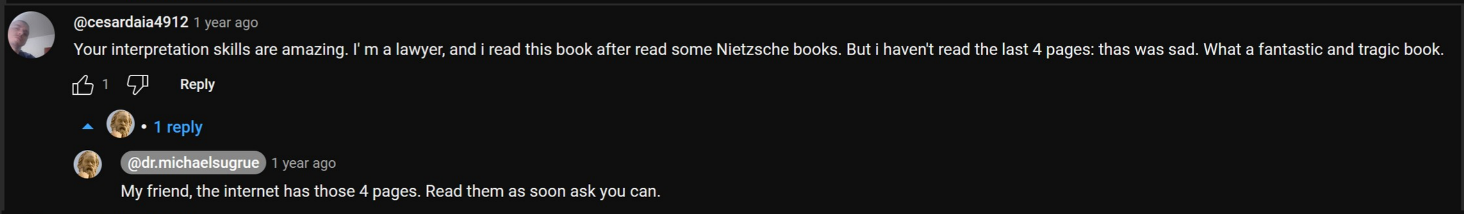
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Ironically, nobody else is either.



@willieluncheonette5843 1 year ago
"Just a single man, Fyodor Dostoevsky, is enough to defeat all the creative novelists of the world. If one has to decide on 10 great novels in all the languages of the world, one will have to choose at least 3 novels of Dostoevsky in those 10. Dostoevsky's insight into human beings and their problems is greater than your so-called psychoanalysts, and there are moments where he reaches the heights of great mystics. His book BROTHERS KARAMAZOV is so great in its insights that no BIBLE or KORAN or GITA comes close.

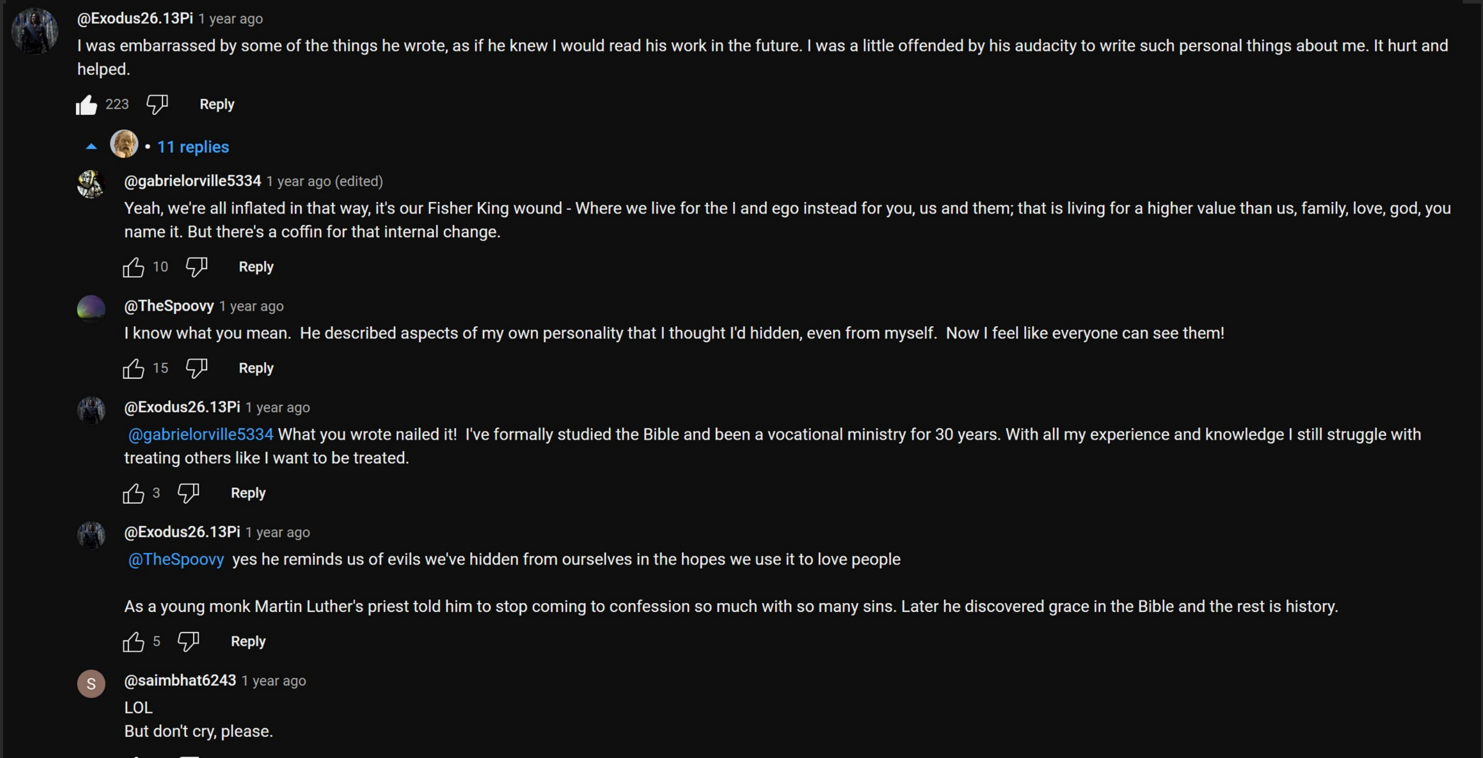
In another masterpiece of Dostoevsky, THE IDIOT, the main character is called 'idiot' by the people because they can't understand his simplicity, his humbleness, his purity, his trust, his love. You can cheat him, you can deceive him, and he will still trust you. He is really one of the most beautiful characters ever created by any novelist. The idiot is a sage. The novel could just as well have been called THE SAGE. Dostoevsky's idiot is not an idiot; he is one of the sanest men amongst an insane humanity. If you can become the idiot of Fyodor Dostoevsky, it is perfectly beautiful. It is better than being cunning priest or politician. Humbleness has such a blessing. Simplicity has such benediction."

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
The Idiot is Jesus.



@cesardaia4912 1 year ago
Your interpretation skills are amazing. I' m a lawyer, and i read this book after read some Nietzsche books. But i haven't read the last 4 pages: thas was sad. What a fantastic and tragic book.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
My friend, the internet has those 4 pages. Read them as soon ask you can.



@Exodus26.13Pi 1 year ago
I was embarrassed by some of the things he wrote, as if he knew I would read his work in the future. I was a little offended by his audacity to write such personal things about me. It hurt and helped.

@gabrielorville5334 1 year ago (edited)
Yeah, we're all inflated in that way, it's our Fisher King wound - Where we live for the I and ego instead for you, us and them; that is living for a higher value than us, family, love, god, you name it. But there's a coffin for that internal change.

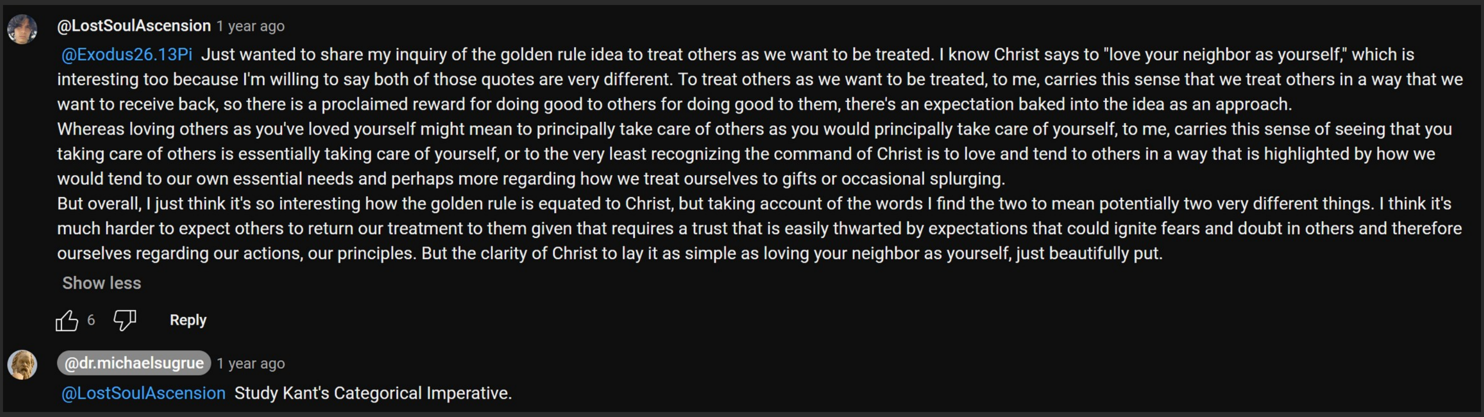
@TheSpoovy 1 year ago
I know what you mean. He described aspects of my own personality that I thought I'd hidden, even from myself. Now I feel like everyone can see them!

@Exodus26.13Pi 1 year ago
@gabrielorville5334 What you wrote nailed it! I've formally studied the Bible and been a vocational ministry for 30 years. With all my experience and knowledge I still struggle with treating others like I want to be treated.

@Exodus26.13Pi 1 year ago
@TheSpoovy yes he reminds us of evils we've hidden from ourselves in the hopes we use it to love people

As a young monk Martin Luther's priest told him to stop coming to confession so much with so many sins. Later he discovered grace in the Bible and the rest is history.

@saimbhat6243 1 year ago
LOL
But don't cry, please.



@LostSoulAscension 1 year ago

@Exodus26.13Pi Just wanted to share my inquiry of the golden rule idea to treat others as we want to be treated. I know Christ says to "love your neighbor as yourself," which is interesting too because I'm willing to say both of those quotes are very different. To treat others as we want to be treated, to me, carries this sense that we treat others in a way that we want to receive back, so there is a proclaimed reward for doing good to others for doing good to them, there's an expectation baked into the idea as an approach.

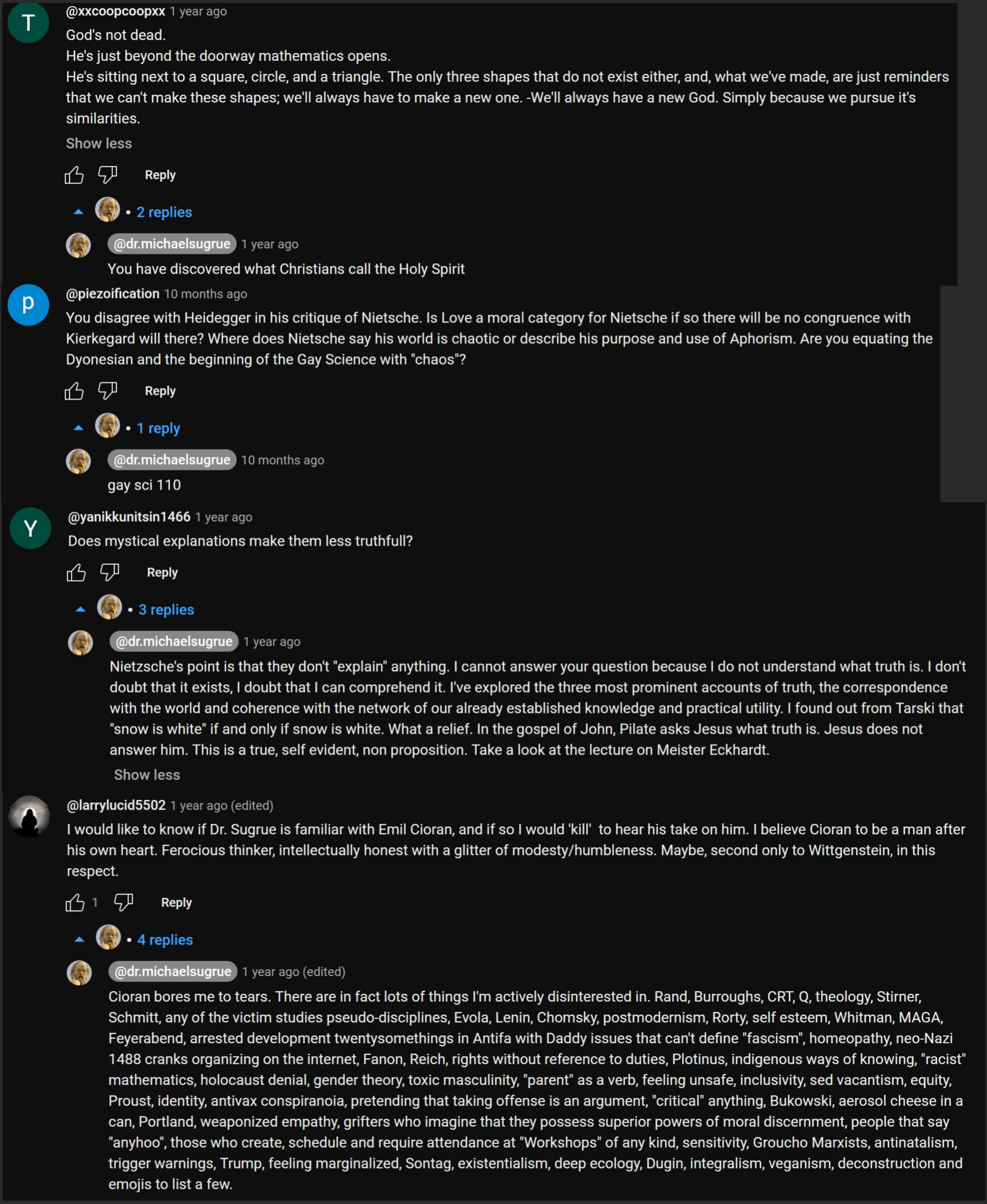
Whereas loving others as you've loved yourself might mean to principally take care of others as you would principally take care of yourself, to me, carries this sense of seeing that you taking care of others is essentially taking care of yourself, or to the very least recognizing the command of Christ is to love and tend to others in a way that is highlighted by how we would tend to our own essential needs and perhaps more regarding how we treat ourselves to gifts or occasional splurging.

But overall, I just think it's so interesting how the golden rule is equated to Christ, but taking account of the words I find the two to mean potentially two very different things. I think it's much harder to expect others to return our treatment to them given that requires a trust that is easily thwarted by expectations that could ignite fears and doubt in others and therefore ourselves regarding our actions, our principles. But the clarity of Christ to lay it as simple as loving your neighbor as yourself, just beautifully put.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@LostSoulAscension Study Kant's Categorical Imperative.

Nietzsche



@xxcoopcoopxx 1 year ago

God's not dead.
He's just beyond the doorway mathematics opens.
He's sitting next to a square, circle, and a triangle. The only three shapes that do not exist either, and, what we've made, are just reminders that we can't make these shapes; we'll always have to make a new one. -We'll always have a new God. Simply because we pursue it's similarities.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You have discovered what Christians call the Holy Spirit

@piezoification 10 months ago

You disagree with Heidegger in his critique of Nietsche. Is Love a moral category for Nietsche if so there will be no congruence with Kierkegard will there? Where does Nietsche say his world is chaotic or describe his purpose and use of Aphorism. Are you equating the Dyonesian and the beginning of the Gay Science with "chaos"?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

gay sci 110

@yanikkunitsin1466 1 year ago

Does mystical explanations make them less truthfull?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

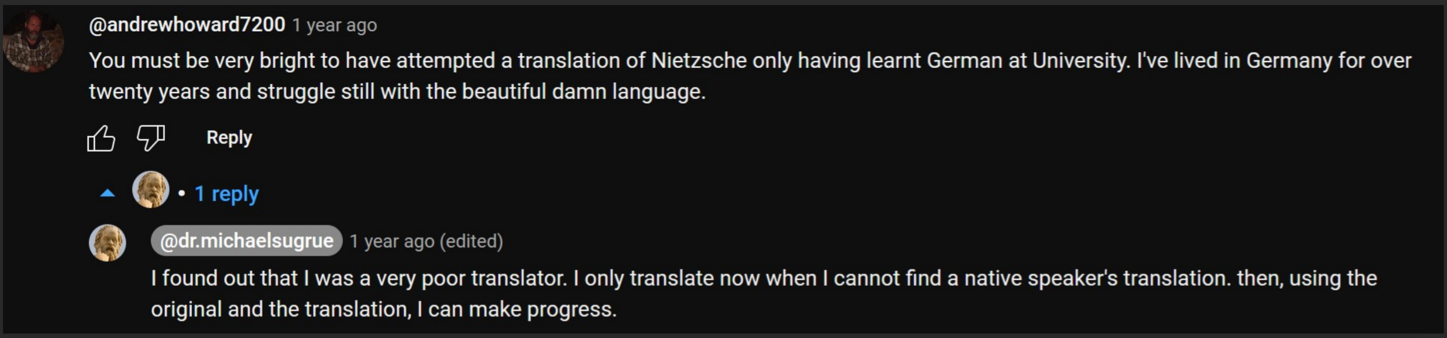
Nietzsche's point is that they don't "explain" anything. I cannot answer your question because I do not understand what truth is. I don't doubt that it exists, I doubt that I can comprehend it. I've explored the three most prominent accounts of truth, the correspondence with the world and coherence with the network of our already established knowledge and practical utility. I found out from Tarski that "snow is white" if and only if snow is white. What a relief. In the gospel of John, Pilate asks Jesus what truth is. Jesus does not answer him. This is a true, self evident, non proposition. Take a look at the lecture on Meister Eckhardt.

@larrylucid5502 1 year ago (edited)

I would like to know if Dr. Sugrue is familiar with Emil Cioran, and if so I would 'kill' to hear his take on him. I believe Cioran to be a man after his own heart. Ferocious thinker, intellectually honest with a glitter of modesty/humbleness. Maybe, second only to Wittgenstein, in this respect.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Cioran bores me to tears. There are in fact lots of things I'm actively disinterested in. Rand, Burroughs, CRT, Q, theology, Stirner, Schmitt, any of the victim studies pseudo-disciplines, Evola, Lenin, Chomsky, postmodernism, Rorty, self esteem, Whitman, MAGA, Feyerabend, arrested development twentysomethings in Antifa with Daddy issues that can't define "fascism", homeopathy, neo-Nazi 1488 cranks organizing on the internet, Fanon, Reich, rights without reference to duties, Plotinus, indigenous ways of knowing, "racist" mathematics, holocaust denial, gender theory, toxic masculinity, "parent" as a verb, feeling unsafe, inclusivity, sed vacantism, equity, Proust, identity, antivax conspiranoia, pretending that taking offense is an argument, "critical" anything, Bukowski, aerosol cheese in a can, Portland, weaponized empathy, grifters who imagine that they possess superior powers of moral discernment, people that say "anyhoo", those who create, schedule and require attendance at "Workshops" of any kind, sensitivity, Groucho Marxists, antinatalism, trigger warnings, Trump, feeling marginalized, Sontag, existentialism, deep ecology, Dugin, integralism, veganism, deconstruction and emojis to list a few.

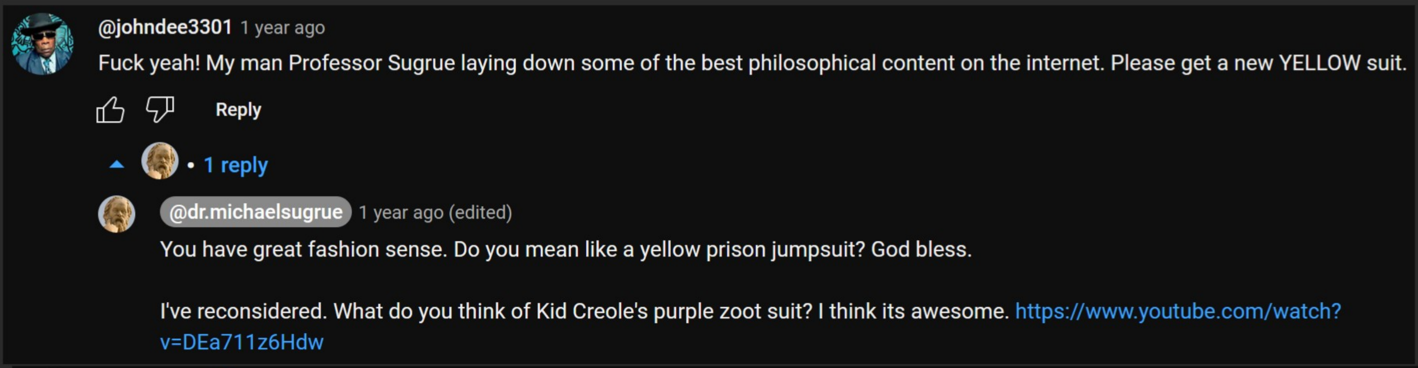


@andrewhoward7200 1 year ago

You must be very bright to have attempted a translation of Nietzsche only having learnt German at University. I've lived in Germany for over twenty years and struggle still with the beautiful damn language.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I found out that I was a very poor translator. I only translate now when I cannot find a native speaker's translation. then, using the original and the translation, I can make progress.



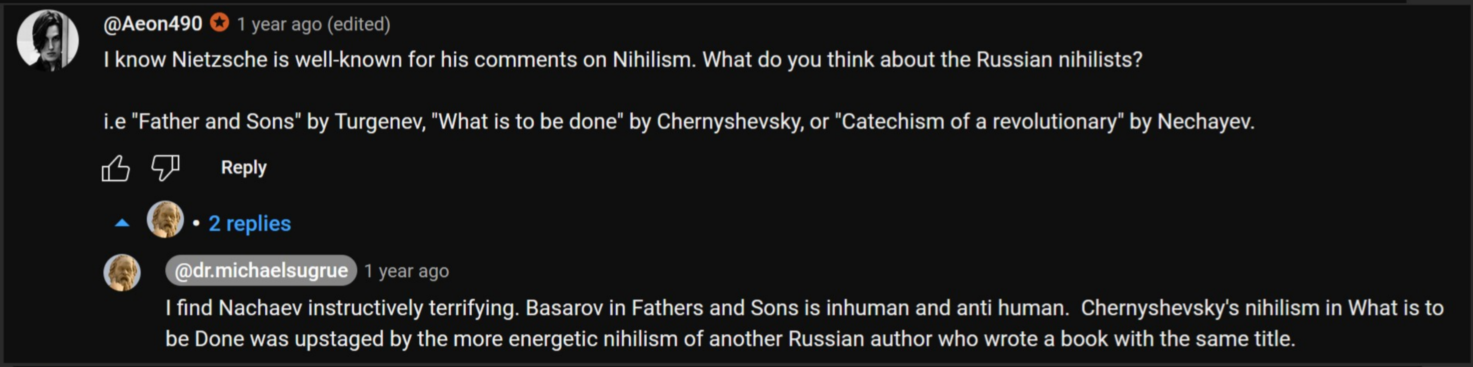
@johndee3301 1 year ago

Fuck yeah! My man Professor Sugrue laying down some of the best philosophical content on the internet. Please get a new YELLOW suit.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

You have great fashion sense. Do you mean like a yellow prison jumpsuit? God bless.

I've reconsidered. What do you think of Kid Creole's purple zoot suit? I think its awesome. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEa711z6Hdw



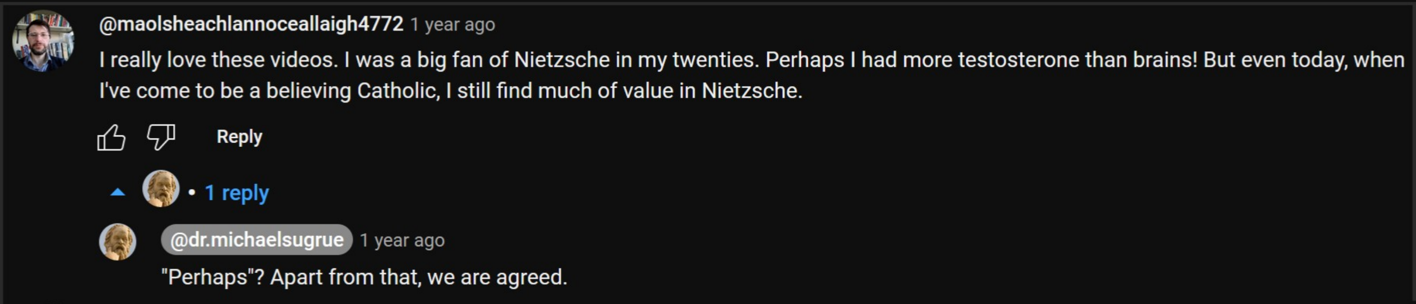
@Aeon490 1 year ago (edited)

I know Nietzsche is well-known for his comments on Nihilism. What do you think about the Russian nihilists?

i.e "Father and Sons" by Turgenev, "What is to be done" by Chernyshevsky, or "Catechism of a revolutionary" by Nechayev.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I find Nachaev instructively terrifying. Basarov in Fathers and Sons is inhuman and anti human. Chernyshevsky's nihilism in What is to be Done was upstaged by the more energetic nihilism of another Russian author who wrote a book with the same title.

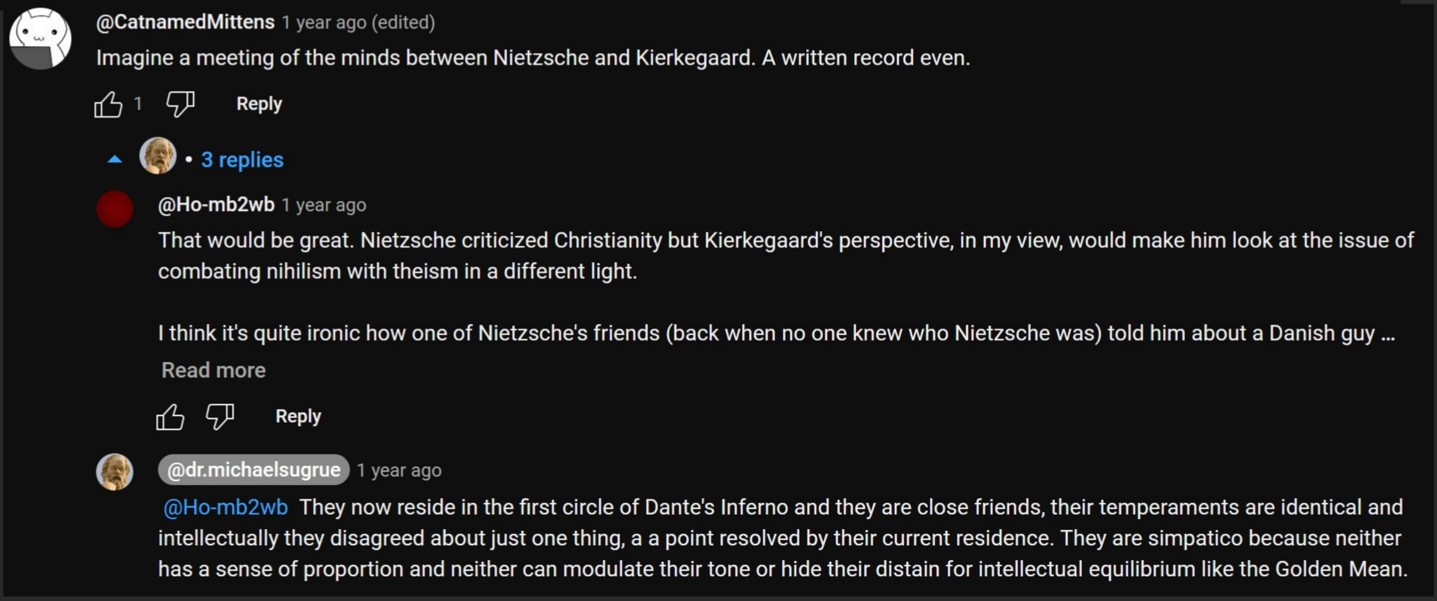


@maolsheachlannoceallaigh4772 1 year ago

I really love these videos. I was a big fan of Nietzsche in my twenties. Perhaps I had more testosterone than brains! But even today, when I've come to be a believing Catholic, I still find much of value in Nietzsche.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

"Perhaps"? Apart from that, we are agreed.



@CatnamedMittens 1 year ago (edited)

Imagine a meeting of the minds between Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. A written record even.

@Ho-mb2wb 1 year ago

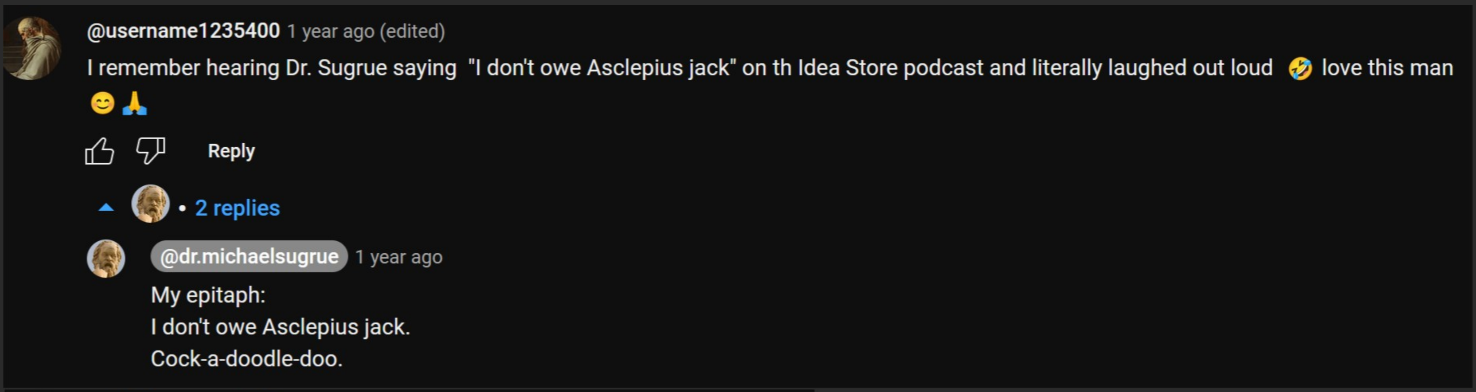
That would be great. Nietzsche criticized Christianity but Kierkegaard's perspective, in my view, would make him look at the issue of combating nihilism with theism in a different light.

I think it's quite ironic how one of Nietzsche's friends (back when no one knew who Nietzsche was) told him about a Danish guy ...

Read more

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

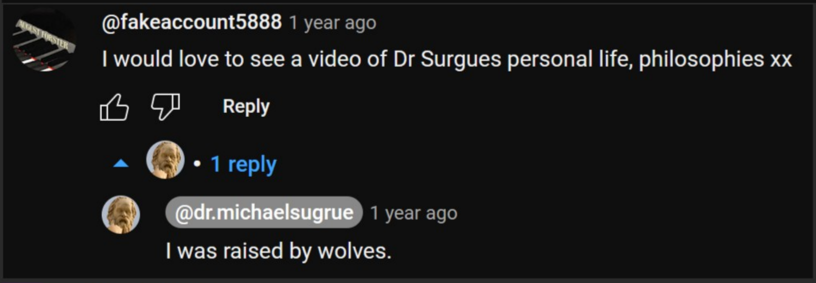
@Ho-mb2wb They now reside in the first circle of Dante's Inferno and they are close friends, their temperaments are identical and intellectually they disagreed about just one thing, a a point resolved by their current residence. They are simpatico because neither has a sense of proportion and neither can modulate their tone or hide their distain for intellectual equilibrium like the Golden Mean.


@username1235400 1 year ago (edited)

I remember hearing Dr. Sugrue saying "I don't owe Asclepius jack" on th Idea Store podcast and literally laughed out loud 🤣 love this man 😊🙏

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

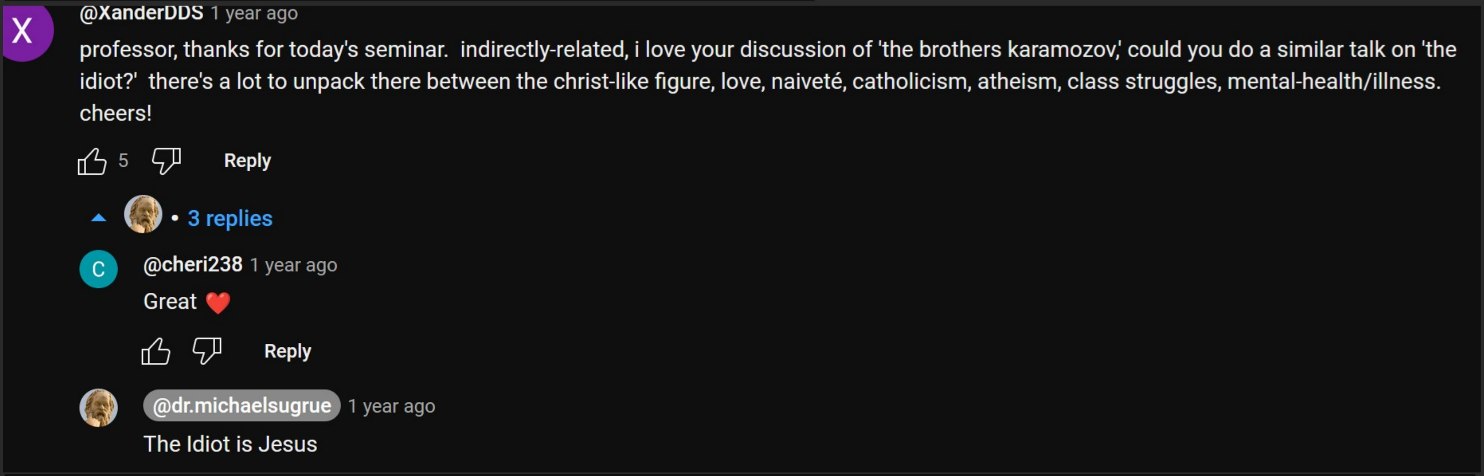
My epitaph:
I don't owe Asclepius jack.
Cock-a-doodle-doo.


@fakeaccount5888 1 year ago

I would love to see a video of Dr Surgues personal life, philosophies xx

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I was raised by wolves.


@XanderDDS 1 year ago

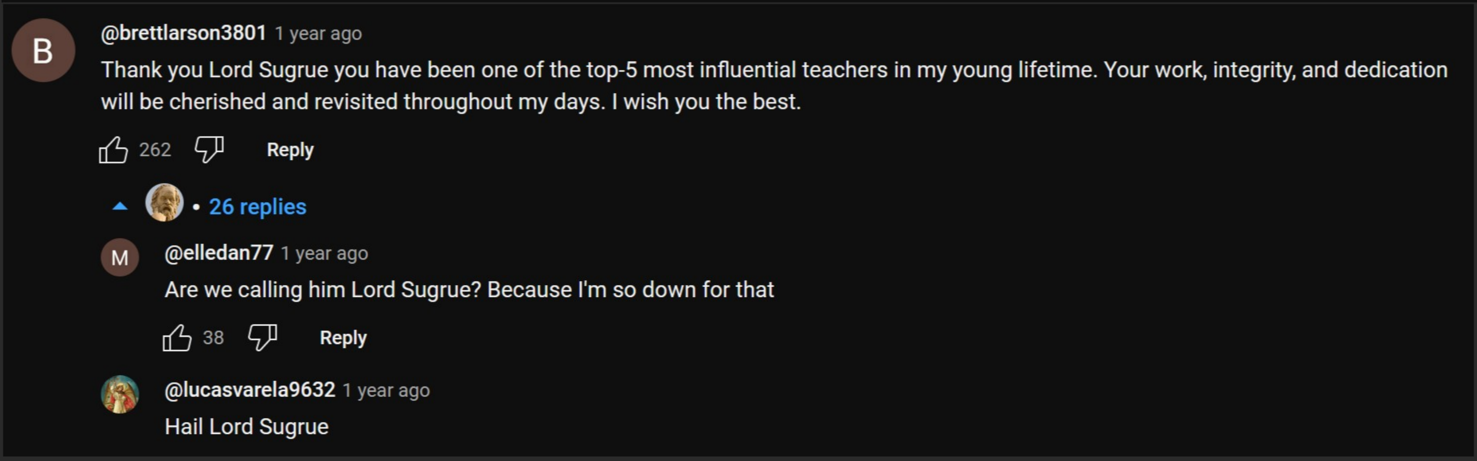
professor, thanks for today's seminar. indirectly-related, i love your discussion of 'the brothers karamozov,' could you do a similar talk on 'the idiot?' there's a lot to unpack there between the christ-like figure, love, naiveté, catholicism, atheism, class struggles, mental-health/illness. cheers!

@cheri238 1 year ago

Great ❤️

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The Idiot is Jesus


@brettlarson3801 1 year ago

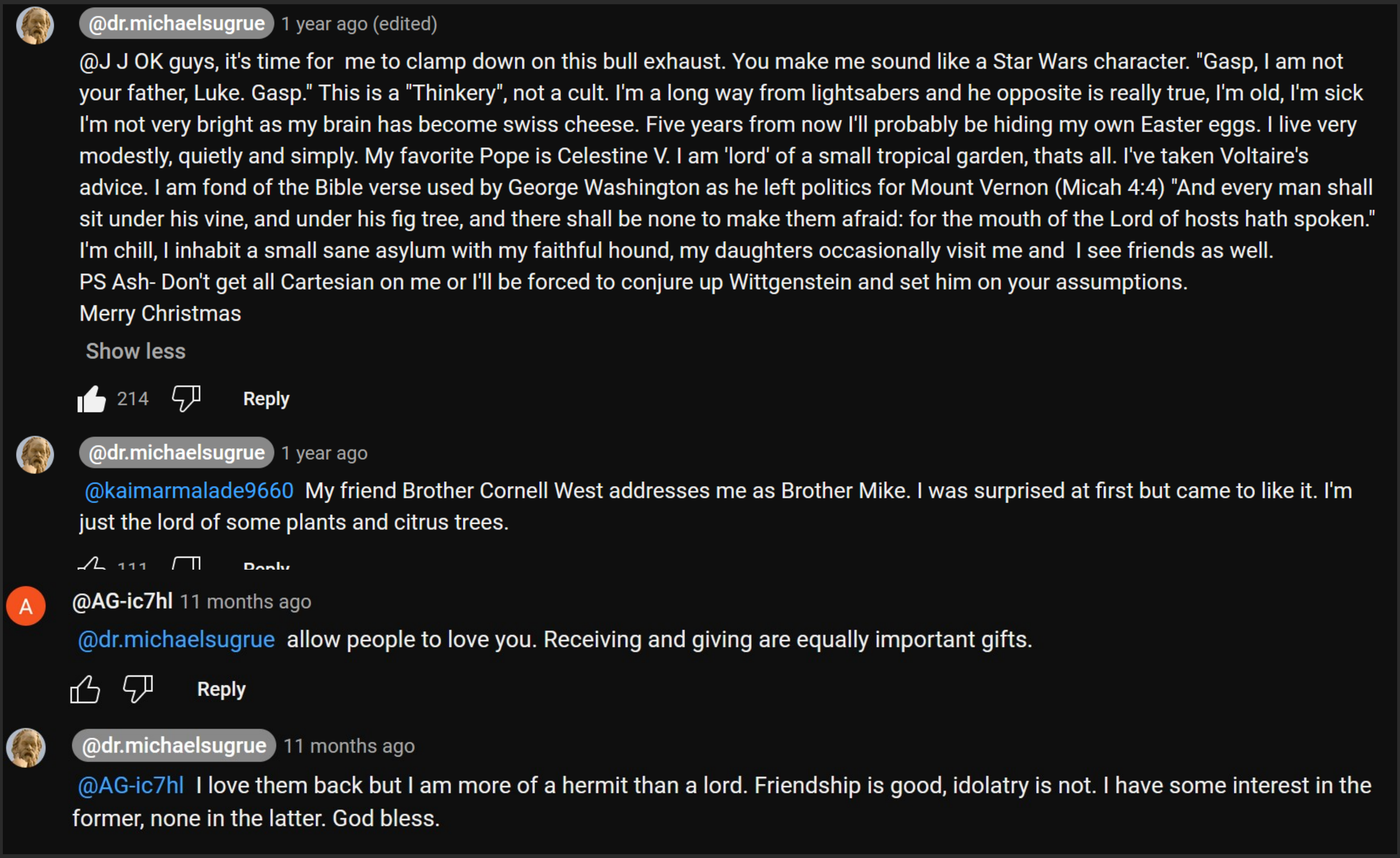
Thank you Lord Sugrue you have been one of the top-5 most influential teachers in my young lifetime. Your work, integrity, and dedication will be cherished and revisited throughout my days. I wish you the best.

@elledan77 1 year ago

Are we calling him Lord Sugrue? Because I'm so down for that

@lucasvarela9632 1 year ago

Hail Lord Sugrue



@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

@J J OK guys, it's time for me to clamp down on this bull exhaust. You make me sound like a Star Wars character. "Gasp, I am not your father, Luke. Gasp." This is a "Thinkery", not a cult. I'm a long way from lightsabers and he opposite is really true, I'm old, I'm sick I'm not very bright as my brain has become swiss cheese. Five years from now I'll probably be hiding my own Easter eggs. I live very modestly, quietly and simply. My favorite Pope is Celestine V. I am 'lord' of a small tropical garden, thats all. I've taken Voltaire's advice. I am fond of the Bible verse used by George Washington as he left politics for Mount Vernon (Micah 4:4) "And every man shall sit under his vine, and under his fig tree, and there shall be none to make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken."
I'm chill, I inhabit a small sane asylum with my faithful hound, my daughters occasionally visit me and I see friends as well.
PS Ash- Don't get all Cartesian on me or I'll be forced to conjure up Wittgenstein and set him on your assumptions.
Merry Christmas

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@kaimarmalade9660 My friend Brother Cornell West addresses me as Brother Mike. I was surprised at first but came to like it. I'm just the lord of some plants and citrus trees.

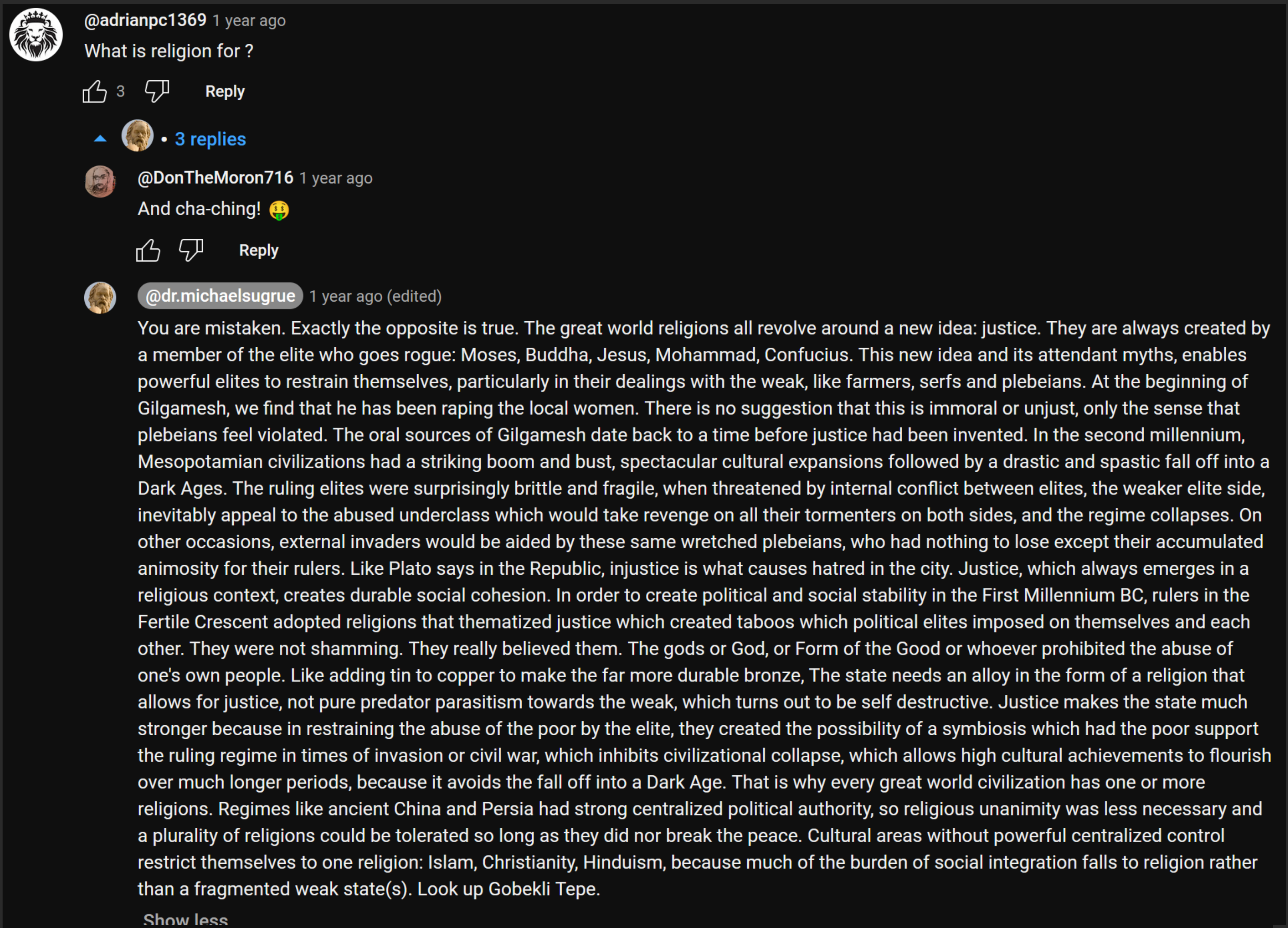
@AG-ic7hl 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue allow people to love you. Receiving and giving are equally important gifts.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

@AG-ic7hl I love them back but I am more of a hermit than a lord. Friendship is good, idolatry is not. I have some interest in the former, none in the latter. God bless.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep.1



@adrianpc1369 1 year ago

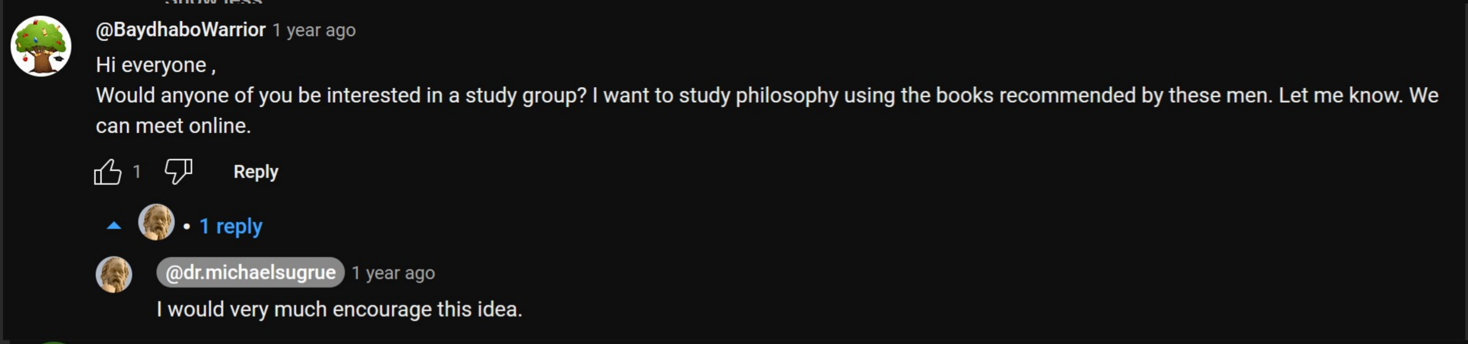
What is religion for ?

@DonTheMoron716 1 year ago

And cha-ching! 🤑

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

You are mistaken. Exactly the opposite is true. The great world religions all revolve around a new idea: justice. They are always created by a member of the elite who goes rogue: Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammad, Confucius. This new idea and its attendant myths, enables powerful elites to restrain themselves, particularly in their dealings with the weak, like farmers, serfs and plebeians. At the beginning of Gilgamesh, we find that he has been raping the local women. There is no suggestion that this is immoral or unjust, only the sense that plebeians feel violated. The oral sources of Gilgamesh date back to a time before justice had been invented. In the second millennium, Mesopotamian civilizations had a striking boom and bust, spectacular cultural expansions followed by a drastic and spastic fall off into a Dark Ages. The ruling elites were surprisingly brittle and fragile, when threatened by internal conflict between elites, the weaker elite side, inevitably appeal to the abused underclass which would take revenge on all their tormenters on both sides, and the regime collapses. On other occasions, external invaders would be aided by these same wretched plebeians, who had nothing to lose except their accumulated animosity for their rulers. Like Plato says in the Republic, injustice is what causes hatred in the city. Justice, which always emerges in a religious context, creates durable social cohesion. In order to create political and social stability in the First Millennium BC, rulers in the Fertile Crescent adopted religions that thematized justice which created taboos which political elites imposed on themselves and each other. They were not shamming. They really believed them. The gods or God, or Form of the Good or whoever prohibited the abuse of one's own people. Like adding tin to copper to make the far more durable bronze, The state needs an alloy in the form of a religion that allows for justice, not pure predator parasitism towards the weak, which turns out to be self destructive. Justice makes the state much stronger because in restraining the abuse of the poor by the elite, they created the possibility of a symbiosis which had the poor support the ruling regime in times of invasion or civil war, which inhibits civilizational collapse, which allows high cultural achievements to flourish over much longer periods, because it avoids the fall off into a Dark Age. That is why every great world civilization has one or more religions. Regimes like ancient China and Persia had strong centralized political authority, so religious unanimity was less necessary and a plurality of religions could be tolerated so long as they did nor break the peace. Cultural areas without powerful centralized control restrict themselves to one religion: Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, because much of the burden of social integration falls to religion rather than a fragmented weak state(s). Look up Gobekli Tepe.

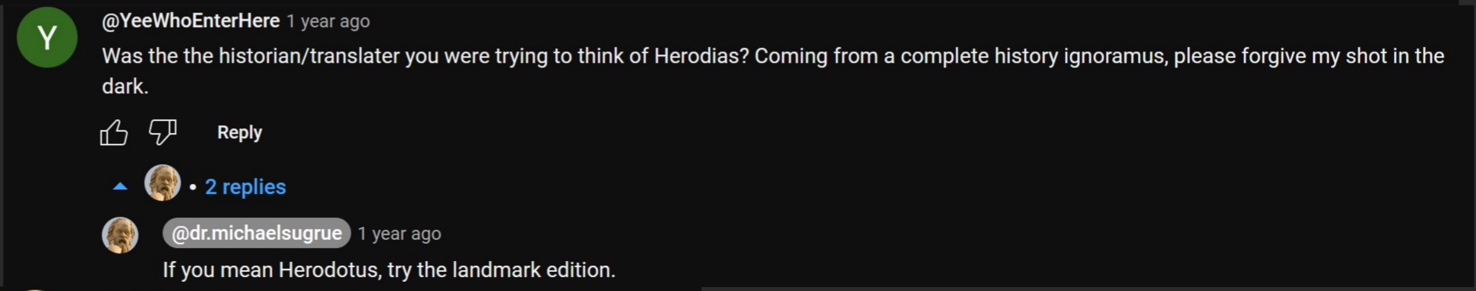


@BaydhaboWarrior 1 year ago

Hi everyone ,
Would anyone of you be interested in a study group? I want to study philosophy using the books recommended by these men. Let me know. We can meet online.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I would very much encourage this idea.

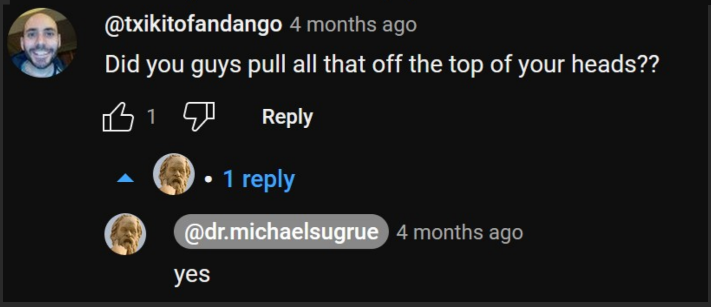


@YeeWhoEnterHere 1 year ago

Was the the historian/translater you were trying to think of Herodias? Coming from a complete history ignoramus, please forgive my shot in the dark.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

If you mean Herodotus, try the landmark edition.

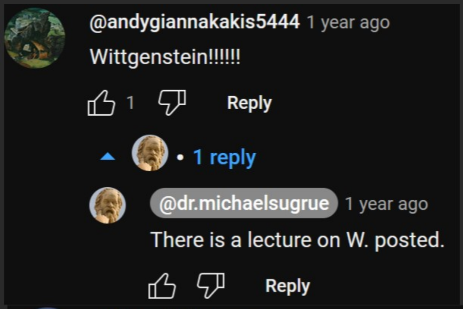


@txikitofandango 4 months ago

Did you guys pull all that off the top of your heads??

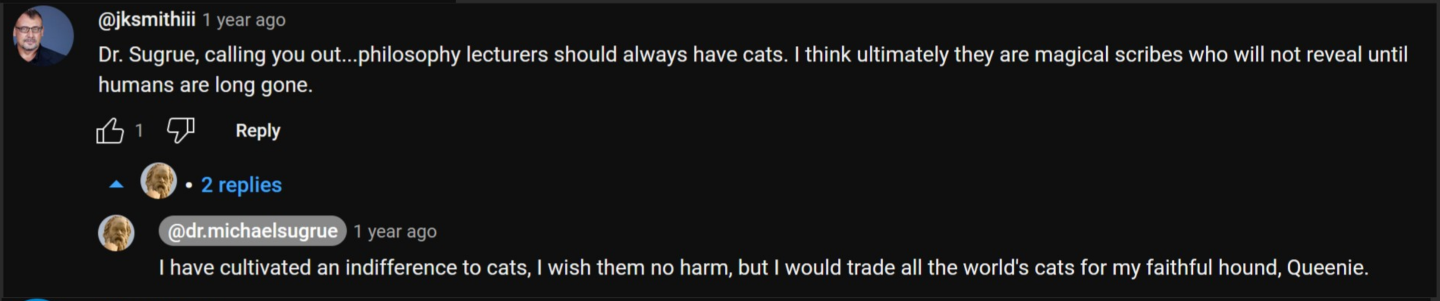
@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

yes



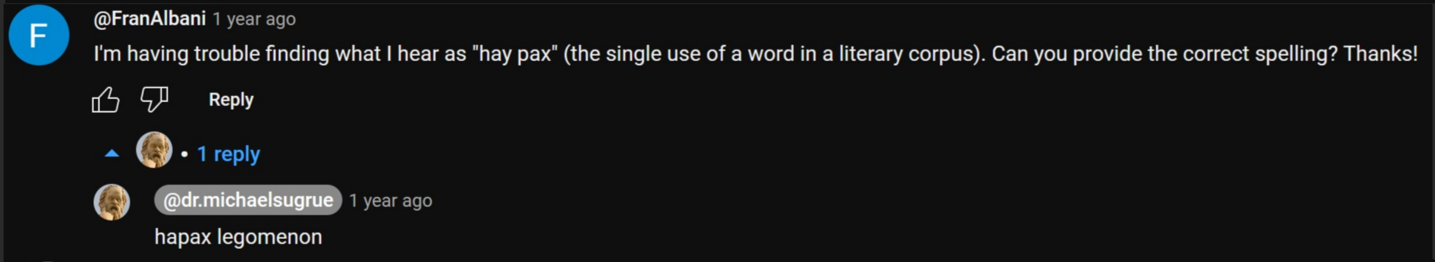
@andygiannakakis5444 1 year ago
Wittgenstein!!!!!!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
There is a lecture on W. posted.



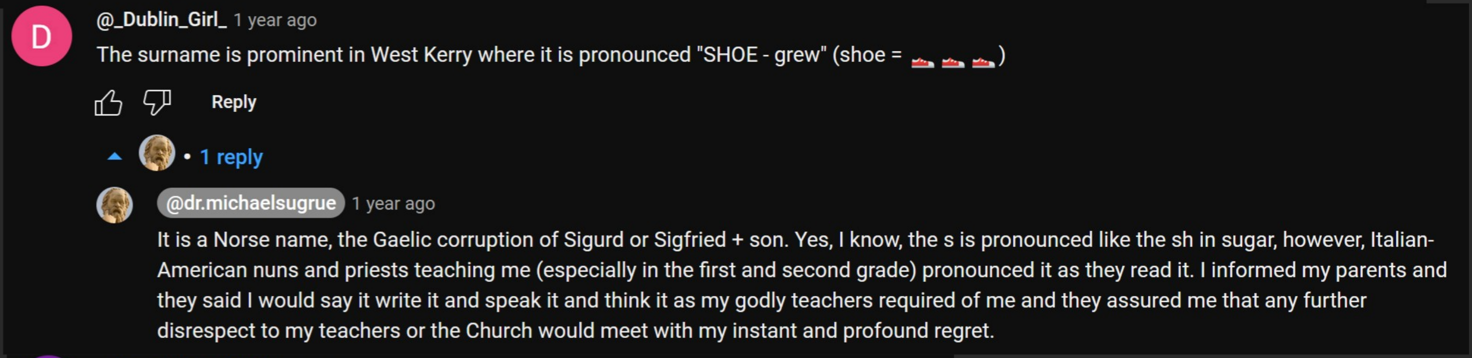
@jksmithiii 1 year ago
Dr. Sugrue, calling you out...philosophy lecturers should always have cats. I think ultimately they are magical scribes who will not reveal until humans are long gone.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
I have cultivated an indifference to cats, I wish them no harm, but I would trade all the world's cats for my faithful hound, Queenie.



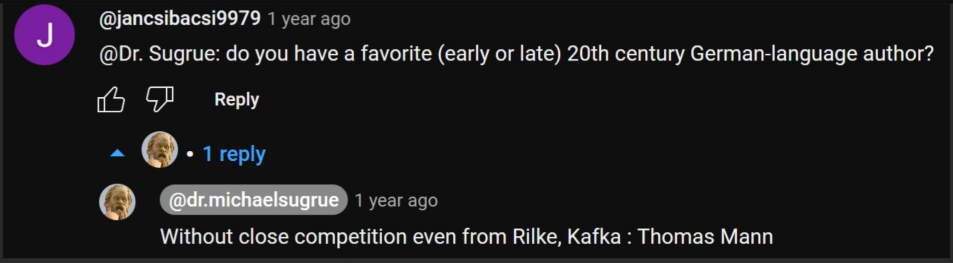
@FranAlbani 1 year ago
I'm having trouble finding what I hear as "hay pax" (the single use of a word in a literary corpus). Can you provide the correct spelling? Thanks!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
hapax legomenon



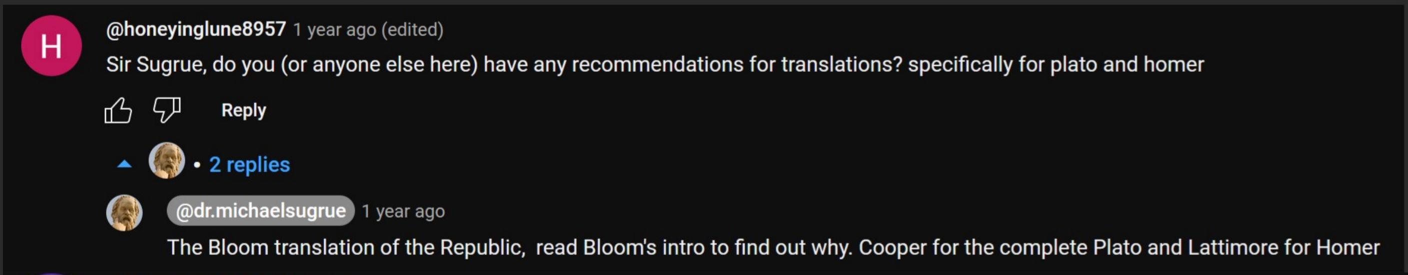
@_Dublin_Girl_ 1 year ago
The surname is prominent in West Kerry where it is pronounced "SHOE - grew" (shoe = 👟👟👟)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
It is a Norse name, the Gaelic corruption of Sigurd or Sigfried + son. Yes, I know, the s is pronounced like the sh in sugar, however, Italian-American nuns and priests teaching me (especially in the first and second grade) pronounced it as they read it. I informed my parents and they said I would say it write it and speak it and think it as my godly teachers required of me and they assured me that any further disrespect to my teachers or the Church would meet with my instant and profound regret.



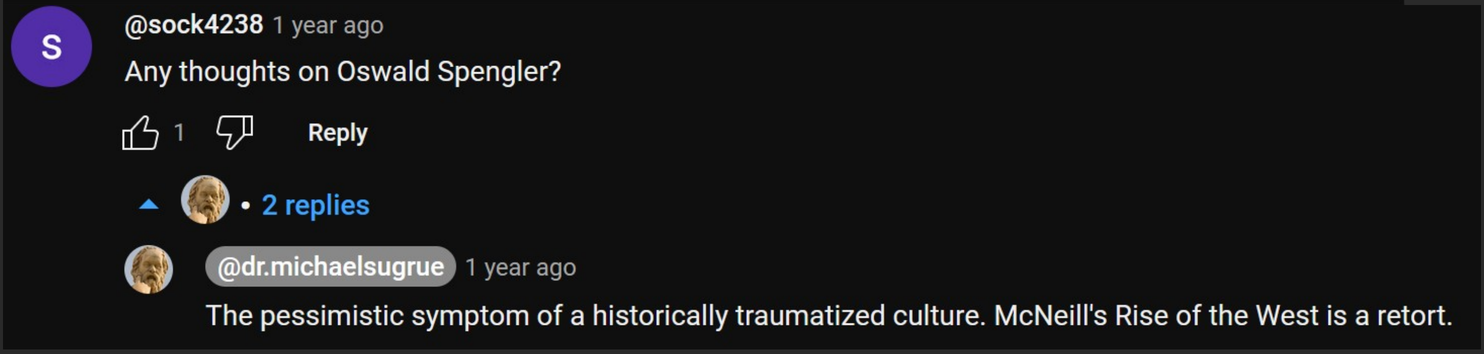
@jancsibacsi9979 1 year ago
@Dr. Sugrue: do you have a favorite (early or late) 20th century German-language author?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Without close competition even from Rilke, Kafka : Thomas Mann



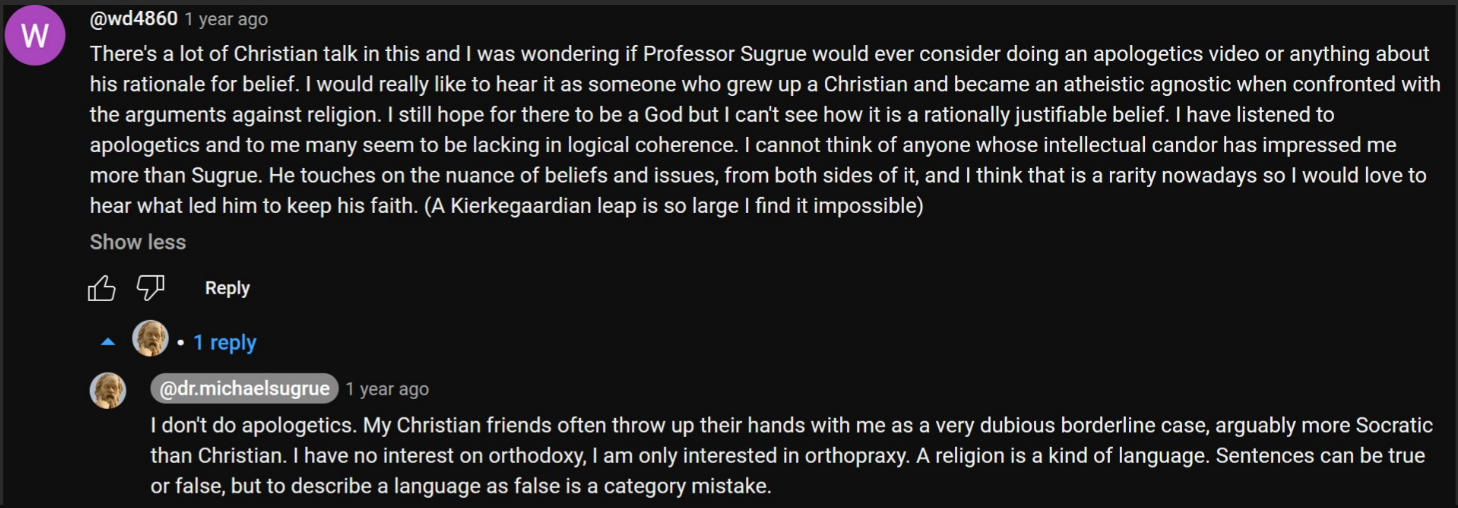
@honeyinglune8957 1 year ago (edited)
Sir Sugrue, do you (or anyone else here) have any recommendations for translations? specifically for plato and homer

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
The Bloom translation of the Republic, read Bloom's intro to find out why. Cooper for the complete Plato and Lattimore for Homer



@sock4238 1 year ago
Any thoughts on Oswald Spengler?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
The pessimistic symptom of a historically traumatized culture. McNeill's Rise of the West is a retort.

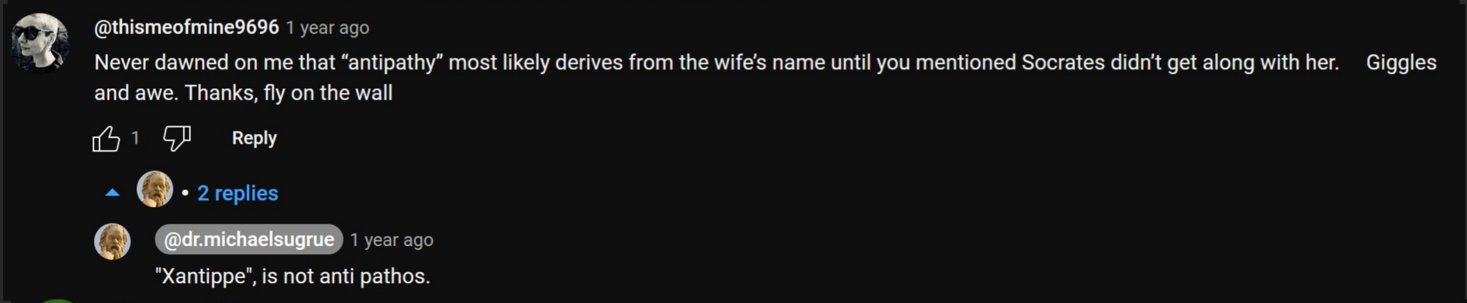


@wd4860 1 year ago

There's a lot of Christian talk in this and I was wondering if Professor Sugrue would ever consider doing an apologetics video or anything about his rationale for belief. I would really like to hear it as someone who grew up a Christian and became an atheistic agnostic when confronted with the arguments against religion. I still hope for there to be a God but I can't see how it is a rationally justifiable belief. I have listened to apologetics and to me many seem to be lacking in logical coherence. I cannot think of anyone whose intellectual candor has impressed me more than Sugrue. He touches on the nuance of beliefs and issues, from both sides of it, and I think that is a rarity nowadays so I would love to hear what led him to keep his faith. (A Kierkegaardian leap is so large I find it impossible)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't do apologetics. My Christian friends often throw up their hands with me as a very dubious borderline case, arguably more Socratic than Christian. I have no interest on orthodoxy, I am only interested in orthopraxy. A religion is a kind of language. Sentences can be true or false, but to describe a language as false is a category mistake.

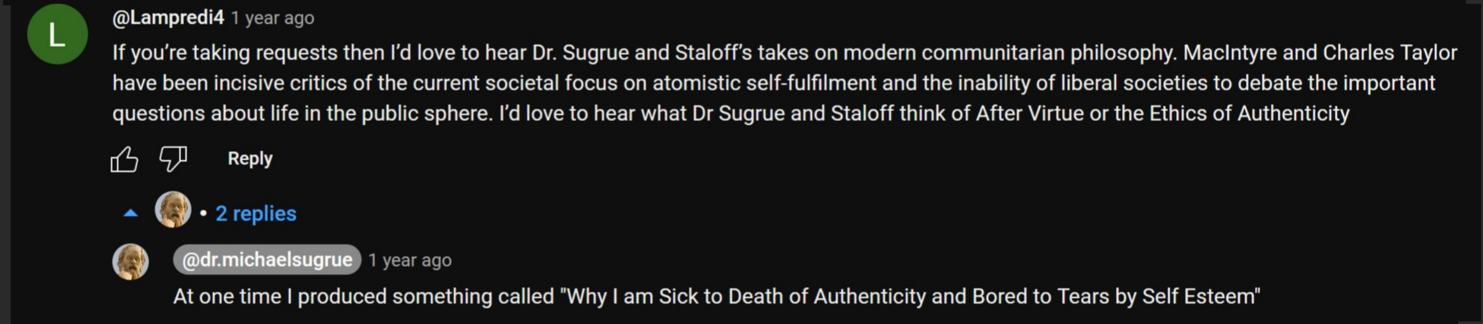


@thismeofmine9696 1 year ago

Never dawned on me that “antipathy” most likely derives from the wife’s name until you mentioned Socrates didn’t get along with her. Giggles and awe. Thanks, fly on the wall

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

"Xantippe", is not anti pathos.

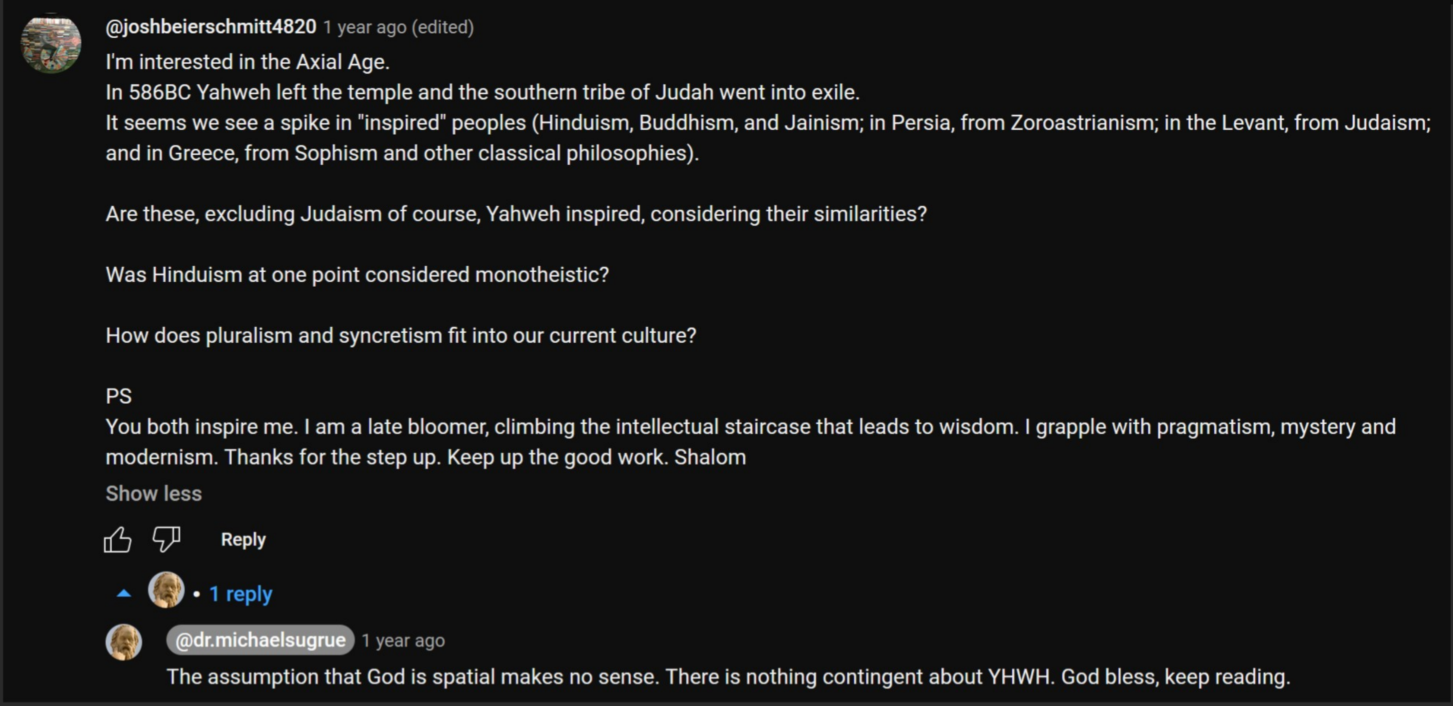


@Lampredi4 1 year ago

If you’re taking requests then I’d love to hear Dr. Sugrue and Staloff’s takes on modern communitarian philosophy. MacIntyre and Charles Taylor have been incisive critics of the current societal focus on atomistic self-fulfilment and the inability of liberal societies to debate the important questions about life in the public sphere. I’d love to hear what Dr Sugrue and Staloff think of After Virtue or the Ethics of Authenticity

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

At one time I produced something called "Why I am Sick to Death of Authenticity and Bored to Tears by Self Esteem"



@joshbeierschmitt4820 1 year ago (edited)

I'm interested in the Axial Age.
In 586BC Yahweh left the temple and the southern tribe of Judah went into exile.
It seems we see a spike in "inspired" peoples (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism; in Persia, from Zoroastrianism; in the Levant, from Judaism; and in Greece, from Sophism and other classical philosophies).

Are these, excluding Judaism of course, Yahweh inspired, considering their similarities?

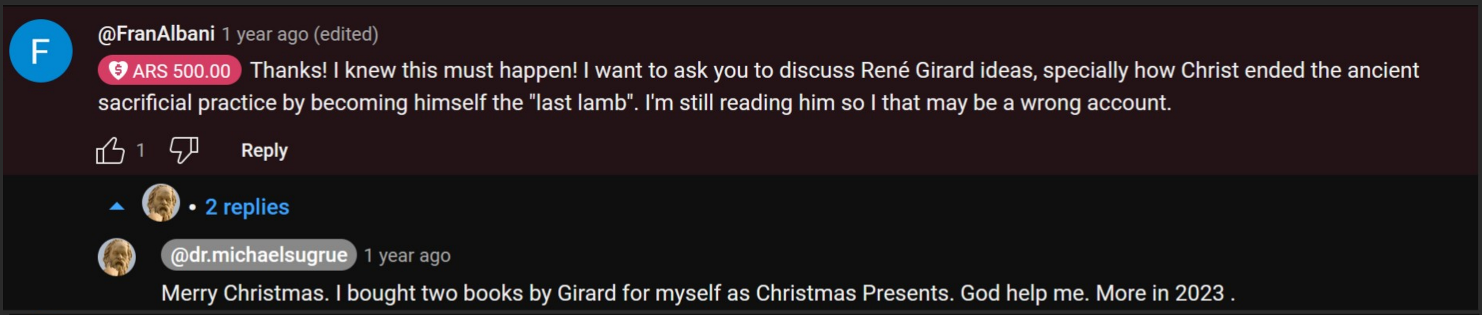
Was Hinduism at one point considered monotheistic?

How does pluralism and syncretism fit into our current culture?

PS
You both inspire me. I am a late bloomer, climbing the intellectual staircase that leads to wisdom. I grapple with pragmatism, mystery and modernism. Thanks for the step up. Keep up the good work. Shalom

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The assumption that God is spatial makes no sense. There is nothing contingent about YHWH. God bless, keep reading.

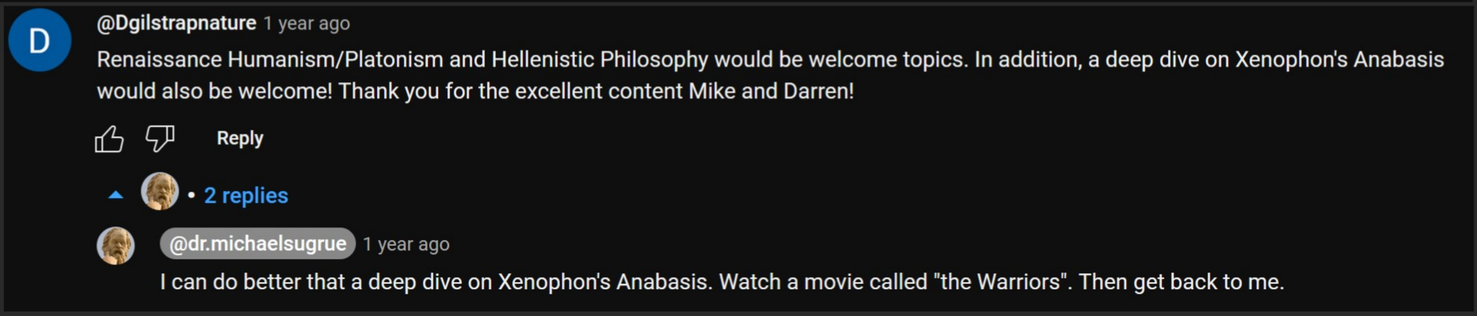


@FranAlbani 1 year ago (edited)

ARS 500.00 Thanks! I knew this must happen! I want to ask you to discuss René Girard ideas, specially how Christ ended the ancient sacrificial practice by becoming himself the "last lamb". I'm still reading him so I that may be a wrong account.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Merry Christmas. I bought two books by Girard for myself as Christmas Presents. God help me. More in 2023 .



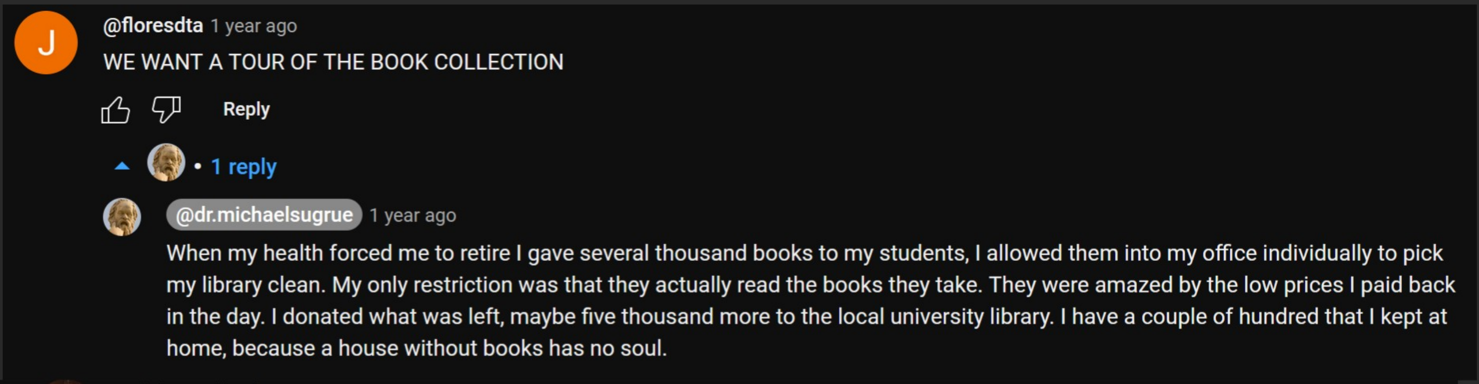
@Dgilstrapnature 1 year ago

Renaissance Humanism/Platonism and Hellenistic Philosophy would be welcome topics. In addition, a deep dive on Xenophon's Anabasis would also be welcome! Thank you for the excellent content Mike and Darren!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I can do better that a deep dive on Xenophon's Anabasis. Watch a movie called "the Warriors". Then get back to me.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep. 2

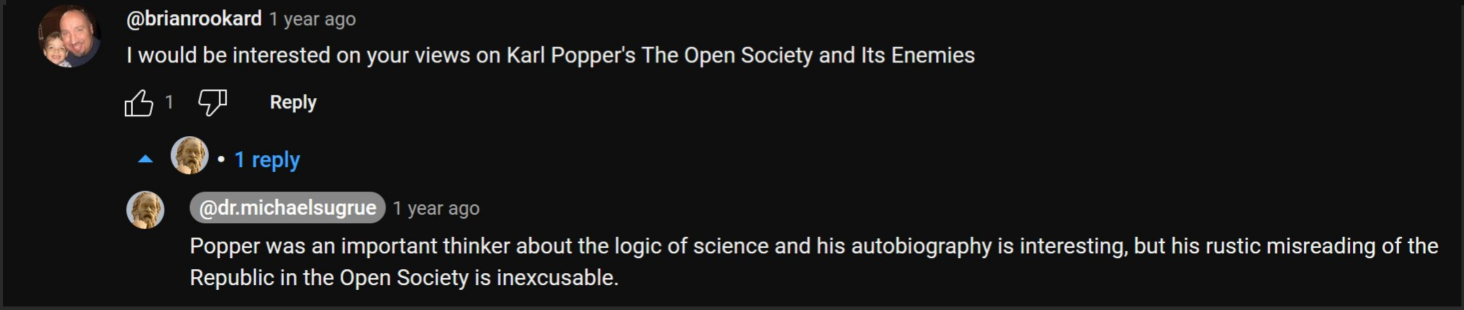


@floresdta 1 year ago

WE WANT A TOUR OF THE BOOK COLLECTION

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

When my health forced me to retire I gave several thousand books to my students, I allowed them into my office individually to pick my library clean. My only restriction was that they actually read the books they take. They were amazed by the low prices I paid back in the day. I donated what was left, maybe five thousand more to the local university library. I have a couple of hundred that I kept at home, because a house without books has no soul.



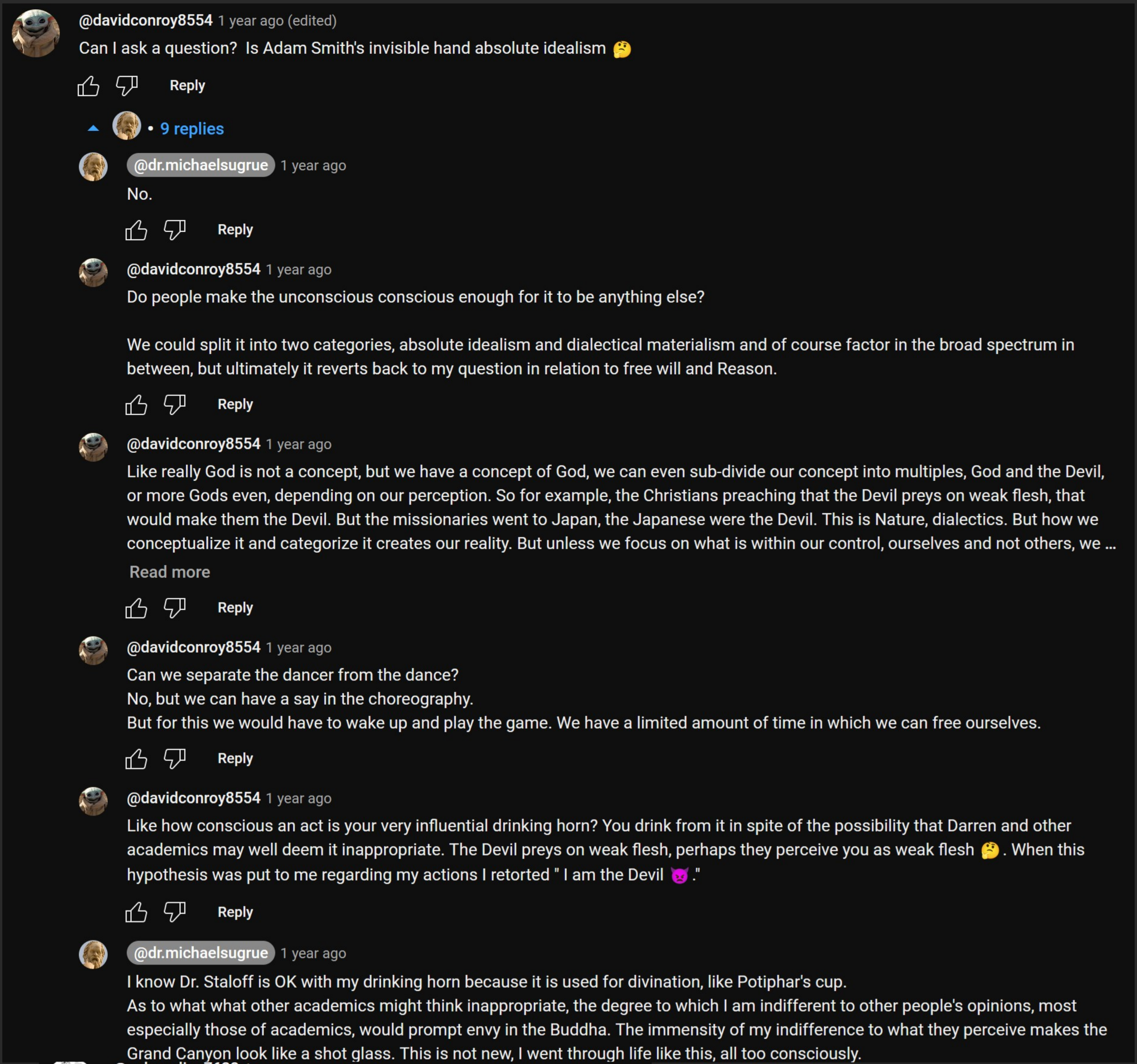
@brianrookard 1 year ago

I would be interested on your views on Karl Popper's The Open Society and Its Enemies

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Popper was an important thinker about the logic of science and his autobiography is interesting, but his rustic misreading of the Republic in the Open Society is inexcusable.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep.3



@davidconroy8554 1 year ago (edited)

Can I ask a question? Is Adam Smith's invisible hand absolute idealism 🤔

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

No.

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

Do people make the unconscious conscious enough for it to be anything else?

We could split it into two categories, absolute idealism and dialectical materialism and of course factor in the broad spectrum in between, but ultimately it reverts back to my question in relation to free will and Reason.

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

Like really God is not a concept, but we have a concept of God, we can even sub-divide our concept into multiples, God and the Devil, or more Gods even, depending on our perception. So for example, the Christians preaching that the Devil preys on weak flesh, that would make them the Devil. But the missionaries went to Japan, the Japanese were the Devil. This is Nature, dialectics. But how we conceptualize it and categorize it creates our reality. But unless we focus on what is within our control, ourselves and not others, we ...

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

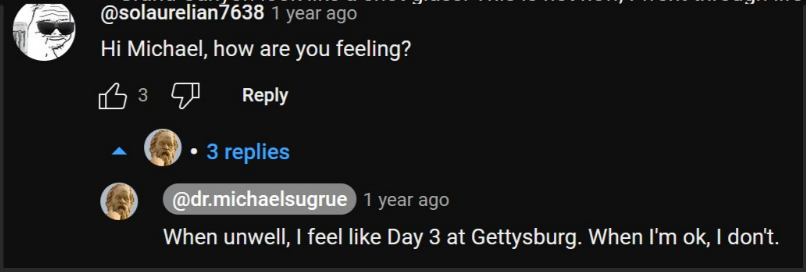
Can we separate the dancer from the dance?
No, but we can have a say in the choreography.
But for this we would have to wake up and play the game. We have a limited amount of time in which we can free ourselves.

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago

Like how conscious an act is your very influential drinking horn? You drink from it in spite of the possibility that Darren and other academics may well deem it inappropriate. The Devil preys on weak flesh, perhaps they perceive you as weak flesh 🤔. When this hypothesis was put to me regarding my actions I retorted " I am the Devil 👿."

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I know Dr. Staloff is OK with my drinking horn because it is used for divination, like Potiphar's cup.
As to what what other academics might think inappropriate, the degree to which I am indifferent to other people's opinions, most especially those of academics, would prompt envy in the Buddha. The immensity of my indifference to what they perceive makes the Grand Canyon look like a shot glass. This is not new, I went through life like this, all too consciously.

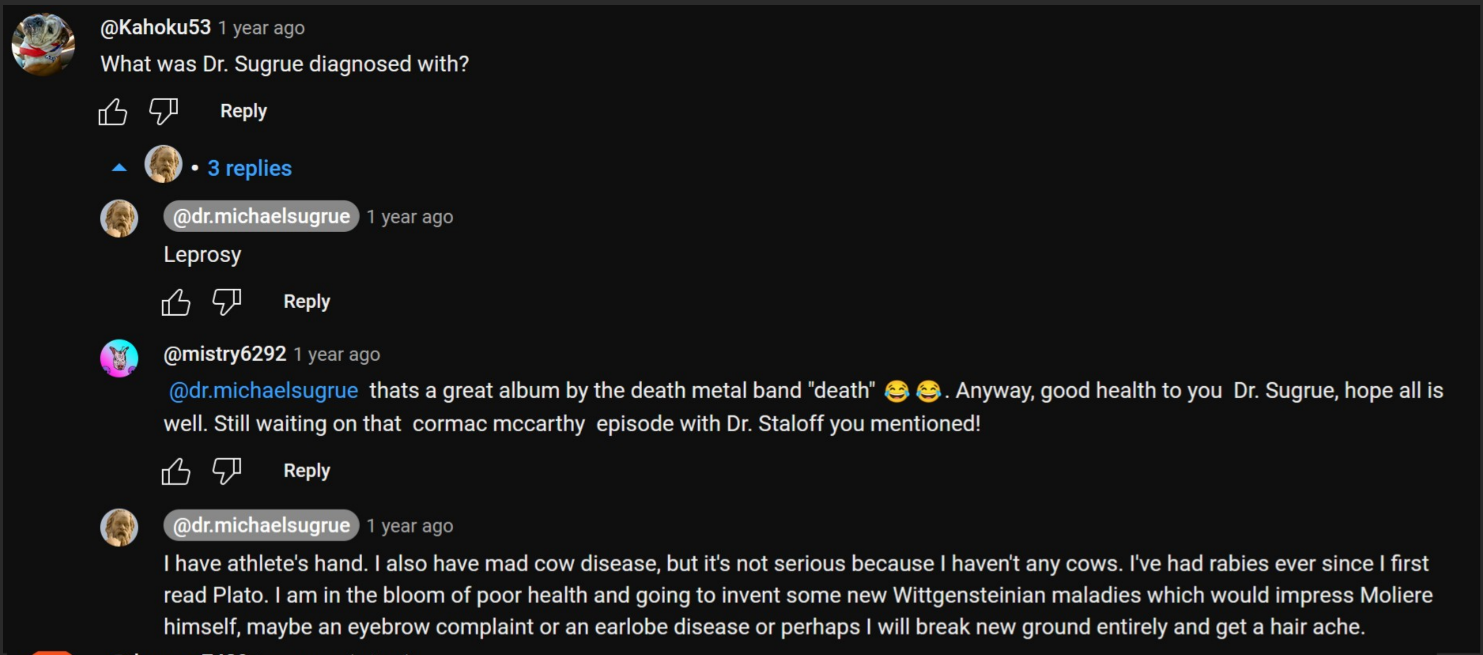


@solaurelian7638 1 year ago

Hi Michael, how are you feeling?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

When unwell, I feel like Day 3 at Gettysburg. When I'm ok, I don't.



@Kahoku53 1 year ago

What was Dr. Sugrue diagnosed with?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

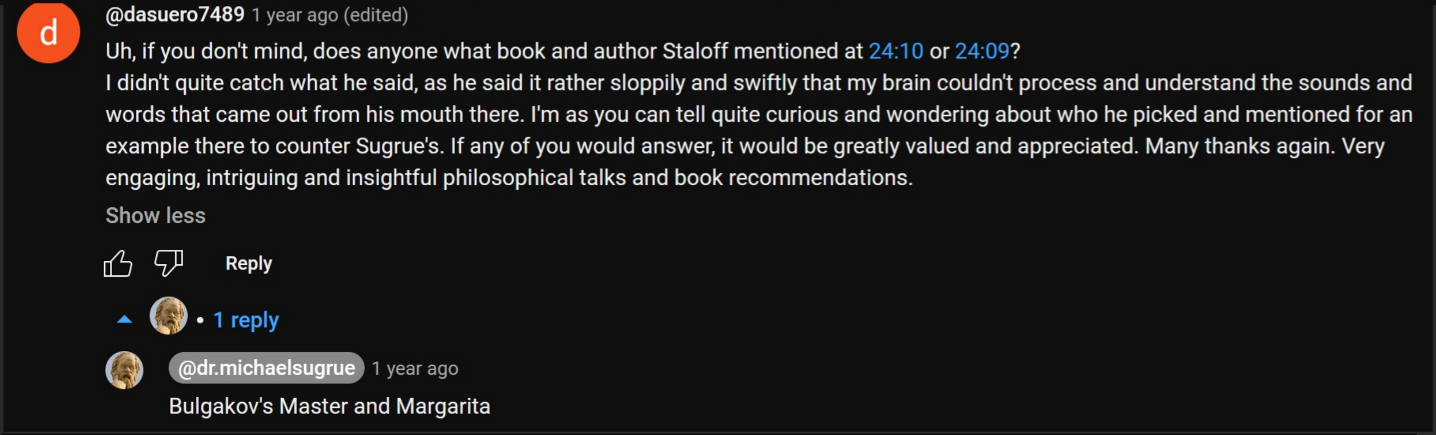
Leprosy

@mistry6292 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue thats a great album by the death metal band "death" 😂 😂. Anyway, good health to you Dr. Sugrue, hope all is well. Still waiting on that cormac mccarthy episode with Dr. Staloff you mentioned!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have athlete's hand. I also have mad cow disease, but it's not serious because I haven't any cows. I've had rabies ever since I first read Plato. I am in the bloom of poor health and going to invent some new Wittgensteinian maladies which would impress Moliere himself, maybe an eyebrow complaint or an earlobe disease or perhaps I will break new ground entirely and get a hair ache.

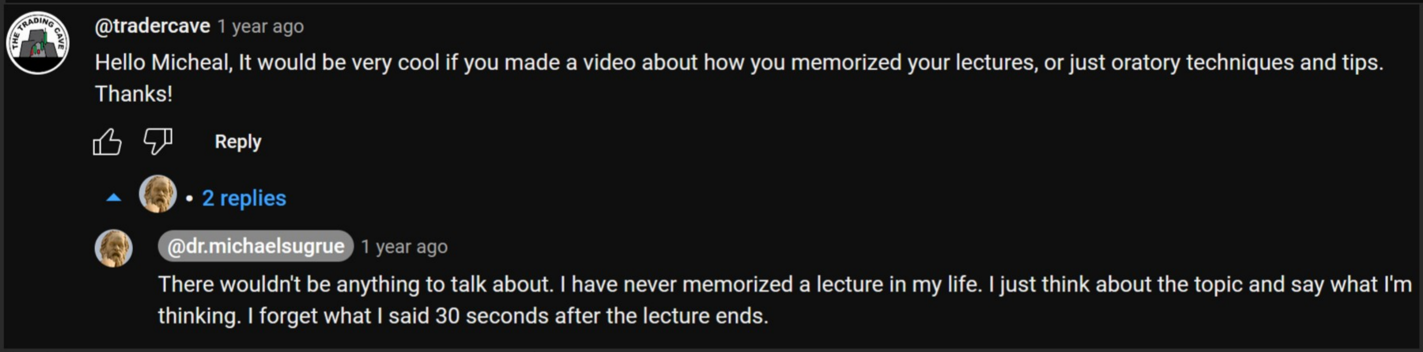


@dasuero7489 1 year ago (edited)

Uh, if you don't mind, does anyone what book and author Staloff mentioned at 24:10 or 24:09?
I didn't quite catch what he said, as he said it rather sloppily and swiftly that my brain couldn't process and understand the sounds and words that came out from his mouth there. I'm as you can tell quite curious and wondering about who he picked and mentioned for an example there to counter Sugrue's. If any of you would answer, it would be greatly valued and appreciated. Many thanks again. Very engaging, intriguing and insightful philosophical talks and book recommendations.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Bulgakov's Master and Margarita

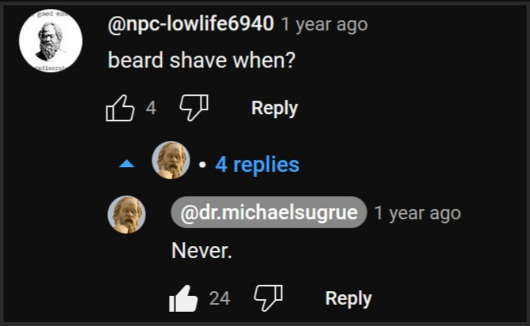


@tradercave 1 year ago

Hello Micheal, It would be very cool if you made a video about how you memorized your lectures, or just oratory techniques and tips. Thanks!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

There wouldn't be anything to talk about. I have never memorized a lecture in my life. I just think about the topic and say what I'm thinking. I forget what I said 30 seconds after the lecture ends.



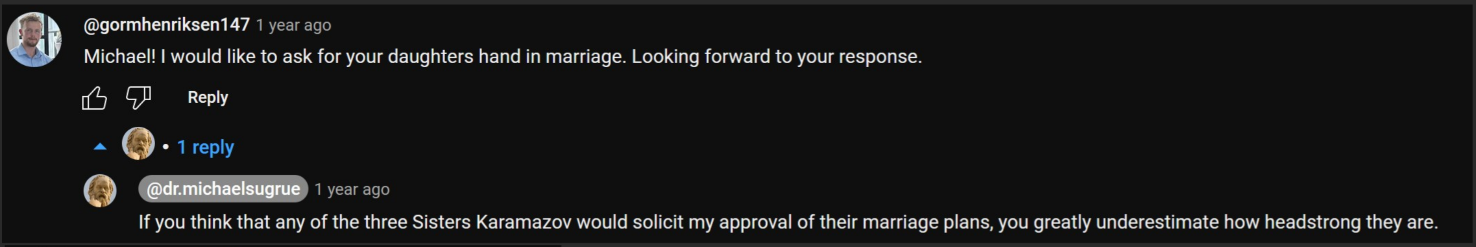
@npc-lowlife6940 1 year ago

beard shave when?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

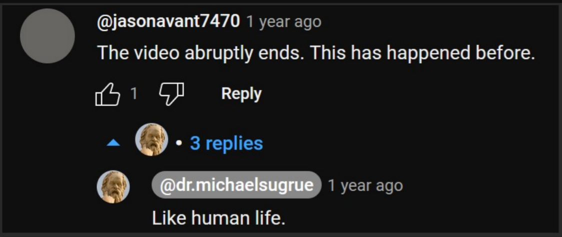
Never.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep. 4



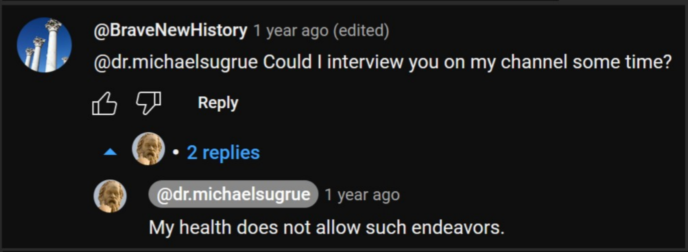
@gormhenriksen147 1 year ago
Michael! I would like to ask for your daughters hand in marriage. Looking forward to your response.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
If you think that any of the three Sisters Karamazov would solicit my approval of their marriage plans, you greatly underestimate how headstrong they are.



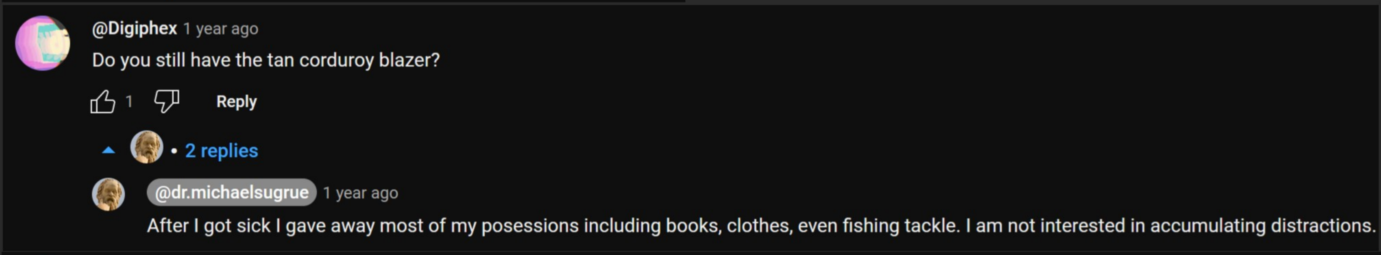
@jasonavant7470 1 year ago
The video abruptly ends. This has happened before.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Like human life.



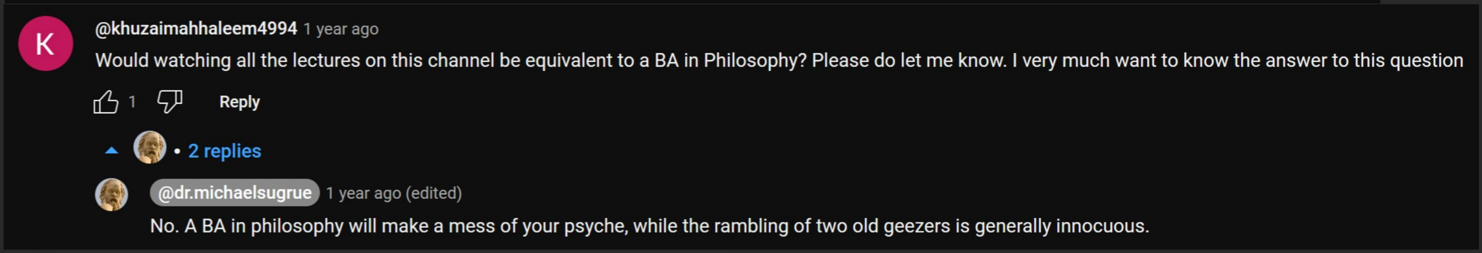
@BraveNewHistory 1 year ago (edited)
@dr.michaelsugrue Could I interview you on my channel some time?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
My health does not allow such endeavors.



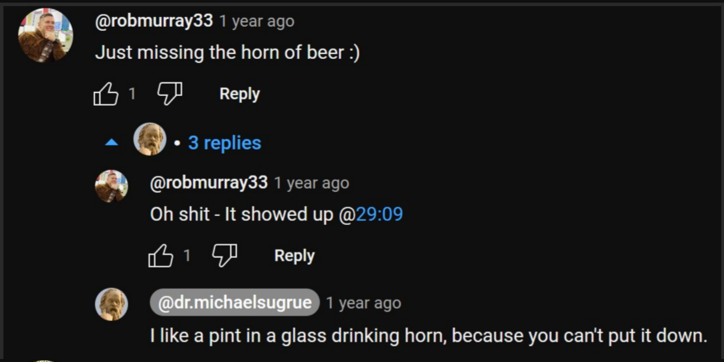
@Digiphex 1 year ago
Do you still have the tan corduroy blazer?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
After I got sick I gave away most of my posessions including books, clothes, even fishing tackle. I am not interested in accumulating distractions.



@khuzaimahhaleem4994 1 year ago
Would watching all the lectures on this channel be equivalent to a BA in Philosophy? Please do let me know. I very much want to know the answer to this question

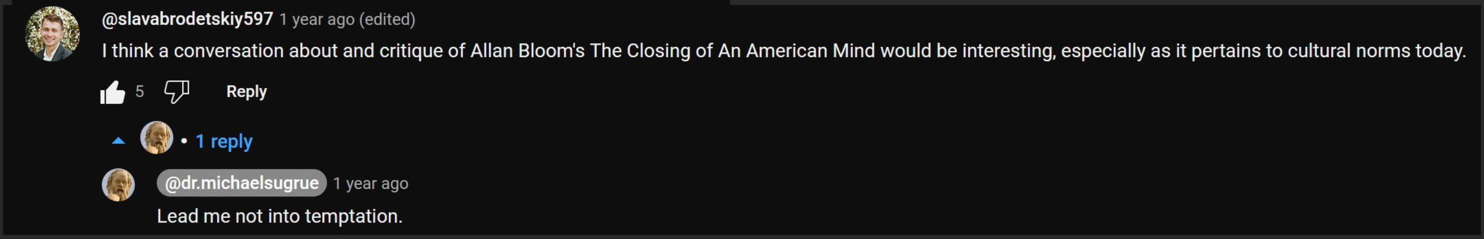
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
No. A BA in philosophy will make a mess of your psyche, while the rambling of two old geezers is generally innocuous.



@robmurray33 1 year ago
Just missing the horn of beer :)

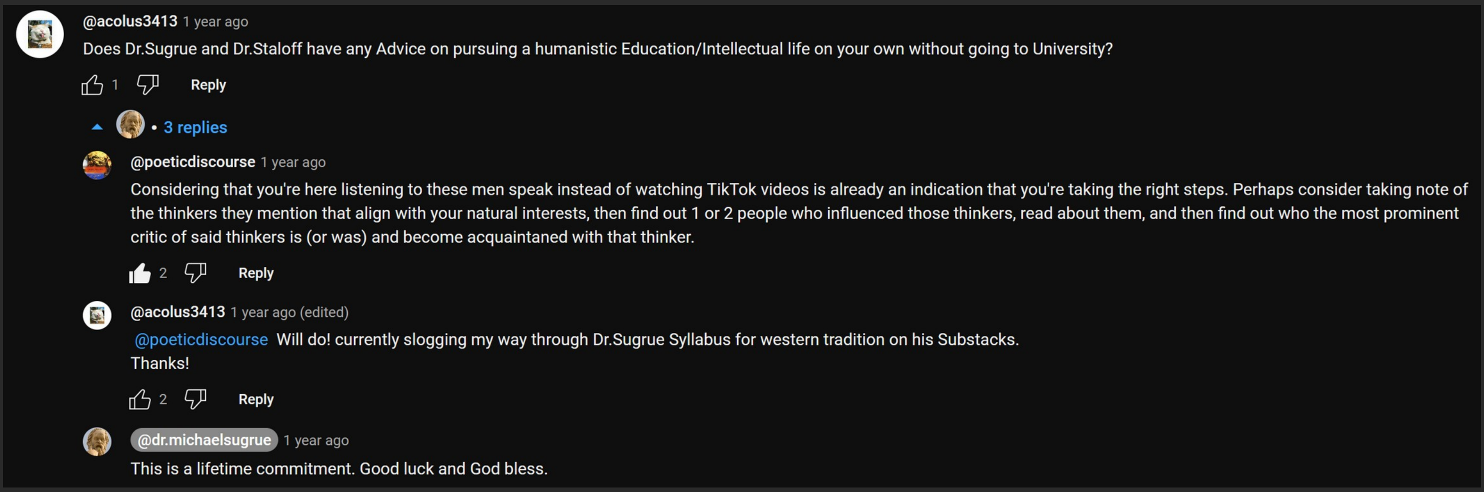
@robmurray33 1 year ago
Oh shit - It showed up @29:09

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
I like a pint in a glass drinking horn, because you can't put it down.



@slavabrodetskiy597 1 year ago (edited)
I think a conversation about and critique of Allan Bloom's The Closing of An American Mind would be interesting, especially as it pertains to cultural norms today.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Lead me not into temptation.



@acolus3413 1 year ago

Does Dr.Sugrue and Dr.Staloff have any Advice on pursuing a humanistic Education/Intellectual life on your own without going to University?

@poeticdiscourse 1 year ago

Considering that you're here listening to these men speak instead of watching TikTok videos is already an indication that you're taking the right steps. Perhaps consider taking note of the thinkers they mention that align with your natural interests, then find out 1 or 2 people who influenced those thinkers, read about them, and then find out who the most prominent critic of said thinkers is (or was) and become acquaintaned with that thinker.

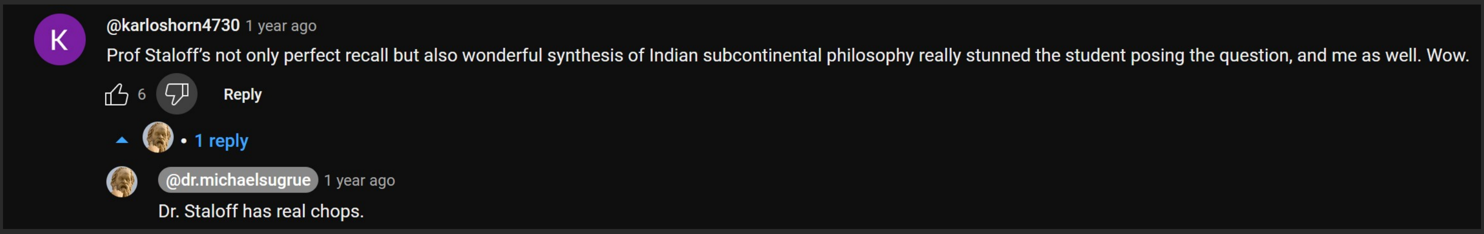
@acolus3413 1 year ago (edited)

@poeticdiscourse Will do! currently slogging my way through Dr.Sugrue Syllabus for western tradition on his Substacks.
Thanks!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

This is a lifetime commitment. Good luck and God bless.

_Dr. Darren Staloff: Q&A with Royal Northern College of Music



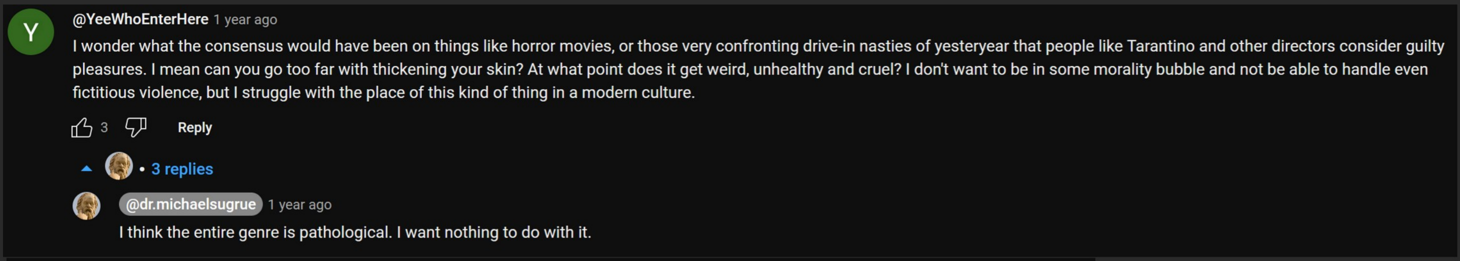
@karloshorn4730 1 year ago

Prof Staloff's not only perfect recall but also wonderful synthesis of Indian subcontinental philosophy really stunned the student posing the question, and me as well. Wow.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Dr. Staloff has real chops.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep. 5 (with Peter Field)

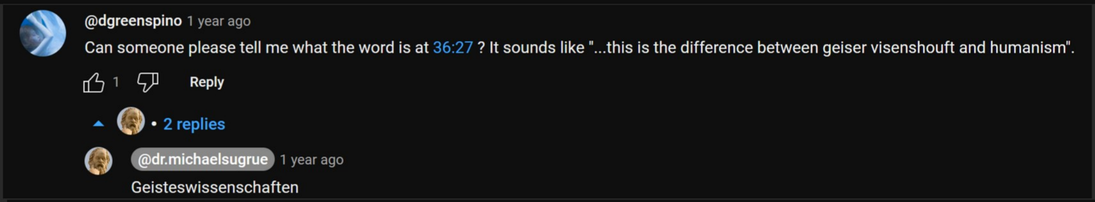


@YeeWhoEnterHere 1 year ago

I wonder what the consensus would have been on things like horror movies, or those very confronting drive-in nasties of yesteryear that people like Tarantino and other directors consider guilty pleasures. I mean can you go too far with thickening your skin? At what point does it get weird, unhealthy and cruel? I don't want to be in some morality bubble and not be able to handle even fictitious violence, but I struggle with the place of this kind of thing in a modern culture.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I think the entire genre is pathological. I want nothing to do with it.

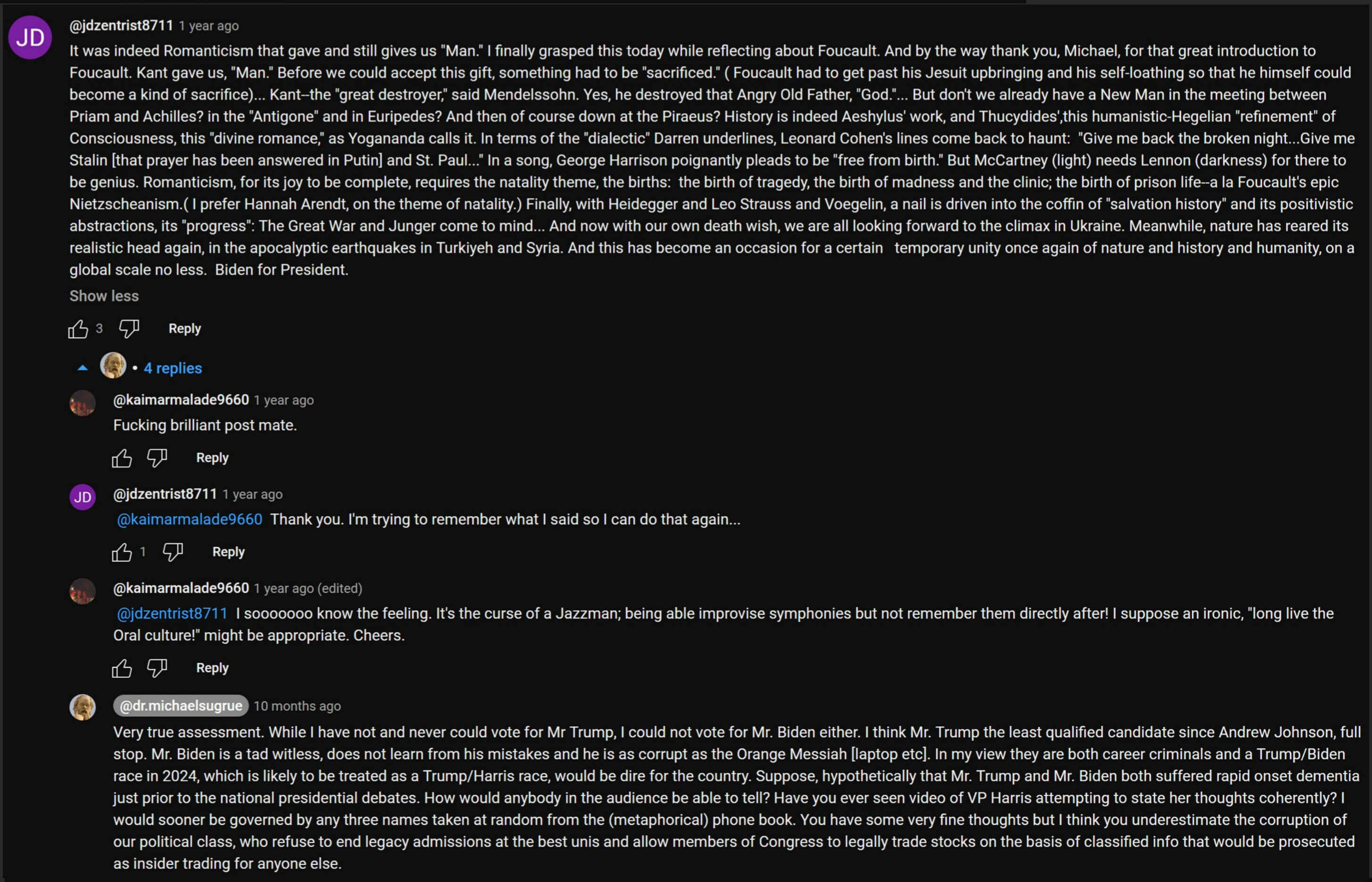


@dgreenspino 1 year ago

Can someone please tell me what the word is at 36:27 ? It sounds like "...this is the difference between geiser visenshouft and humanism".

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Geisteswissenschaften



@jdzentrist8711 1 year ago

It was indeed Romanticism that gave and still gives us "Man." I finally grasped this today while reflecting about Foucault. And by the way thank you, Michael, for that great introduction to Foucault. Kant gave us, "Man." Before we could accept this gift, something had to be "sacrificed." (Foucault had to get past his Jesuit upbringing and his self-loathing so that he himself could become a kind of sacrifice)... Kant--the "great destroyer," said Mendelssohn. Yes, he destroyed that Angry Old Father, "God."... But don't we already have a New Man in the meeting between Priam and Achilles? in the "Antigone" and in Euripedes? And then of course down at the Piraeus? History is indeed Aeshylus' work, and Thucydides',this humanistic-Hegelian "refinement" of Consciousness, this "divine romance," as Yogananda calls it. In terms of the "dialectic" Darren underlines, Leonard Cohen's lines come back to haunt: "Give me back the broken night...Give me Stalin [that prayer has been answered in Putin] and St. Paul..." In a song, George Harrison poignantly pleads to be "free from birth." But McCartney (light) needs Lennon (darkness) for there to be genius. Romanticism, for its joy to be complete, requires the natality theme, the births: the birth of tragedy, the birth of madness and the clinic; the birth of prison life--a la Foucault's epic Nietzscheanism.(I prefer Hannah Arendt, on the theme of natality.) Finally, with Heidegger and Leo Strauss and Voegelin, a nail is driven into the coffin of "salvation history" and its positivistic abstractions, its "progress": The Great War and Junger come to mind... And now with our own death wish, we are all looking forward to the climax in Ukraine. Meanwhile, nature has reared its realistic head again, in the apocalyptic earthquakes in Turkiyeh and Syria. And this has become an occasion for a certain temporary unity once again of nature and history and humanity, on a global scale no less. Biden for President.

@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago

Fucking brilliant post mate.

@jdzentrist8711 1 year ago

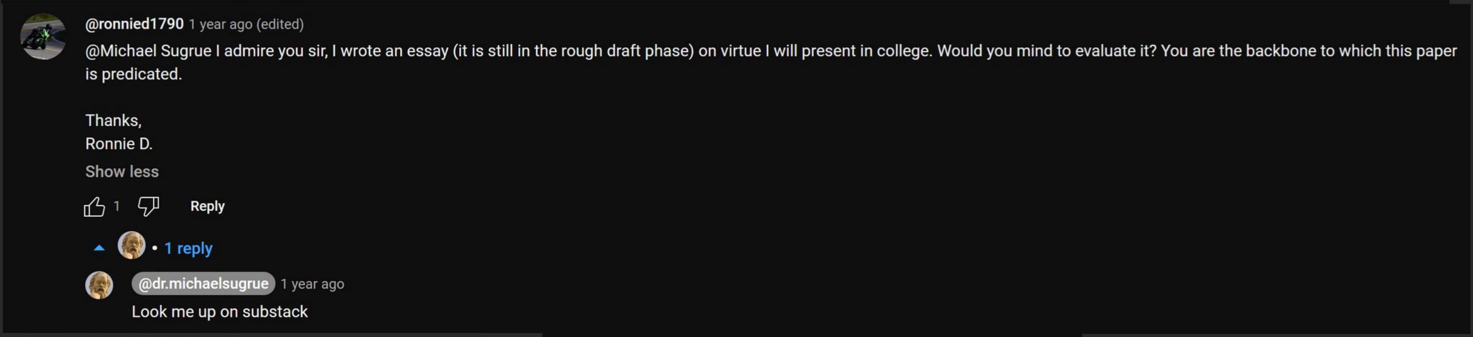
@kaimarmalade9660 Thank you. I'm trying to remember what I said so I can do that again...

@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago (edited)

@jdzentrist8711 I sooooooo know the feeling. It's the curse of a Jazzman; being able improvise symphonies but not remember them directly after! I suppose an ironic, "long live the Oral culture!" might be appropriate. Cheers.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

Very true assessment. While I have not and never could vote for Mr Trump, I could not vote for Mr. Biden either. I think Mr. Trump the least qualified candidate since Andrew Johnson, full stop. Mr. Biden is a tad witless, does not learn from his mistakes and he is as corrupt as the Orange Messiah [laptop etc]. In my view they are both career criminals and a Trump/Biden race in 2024, which is likely to be treated as a Trump/Harris race, would be dire for the country. Suppose, hypothetically that Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden both suffered rapid onset dementia just prior to the national presidential debates. How would anybody in the audience be able to tell? Have you ever seen video of VP Harris attempting to state her thoughts coherently? I would sooner be governed by any three names taken at random from the (metaphorical) phone book. You have some very fine thoughts but I think you underestimate the corruption of our political class, who refuse to end legacy admissions at the best unis and allow members of Congress to legally trade stocks on the basis of classified info that would be prosecuted as insider trading for anyone else.



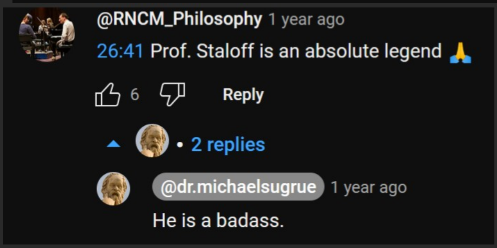
@ronnied1790 1 year ago (edited)

@Michael Sugrue I admire you sir, I wrote an essay (it is still in the rough draft phase) on virtue I will present in college. Would you mind to evaluate it? You are the backbone to which this paper is predicated.

Thanks,
Ronnie D.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Look me up on substack

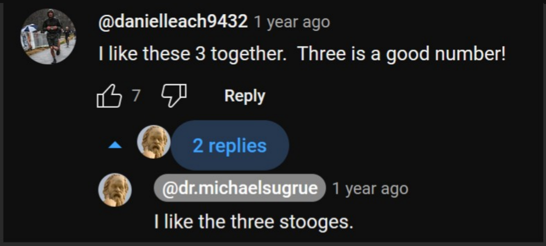


@RNCM_Philosophy 1 year ago

26:41 Prof. Staloff is an absolute legend 🙏

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

He is a badass.



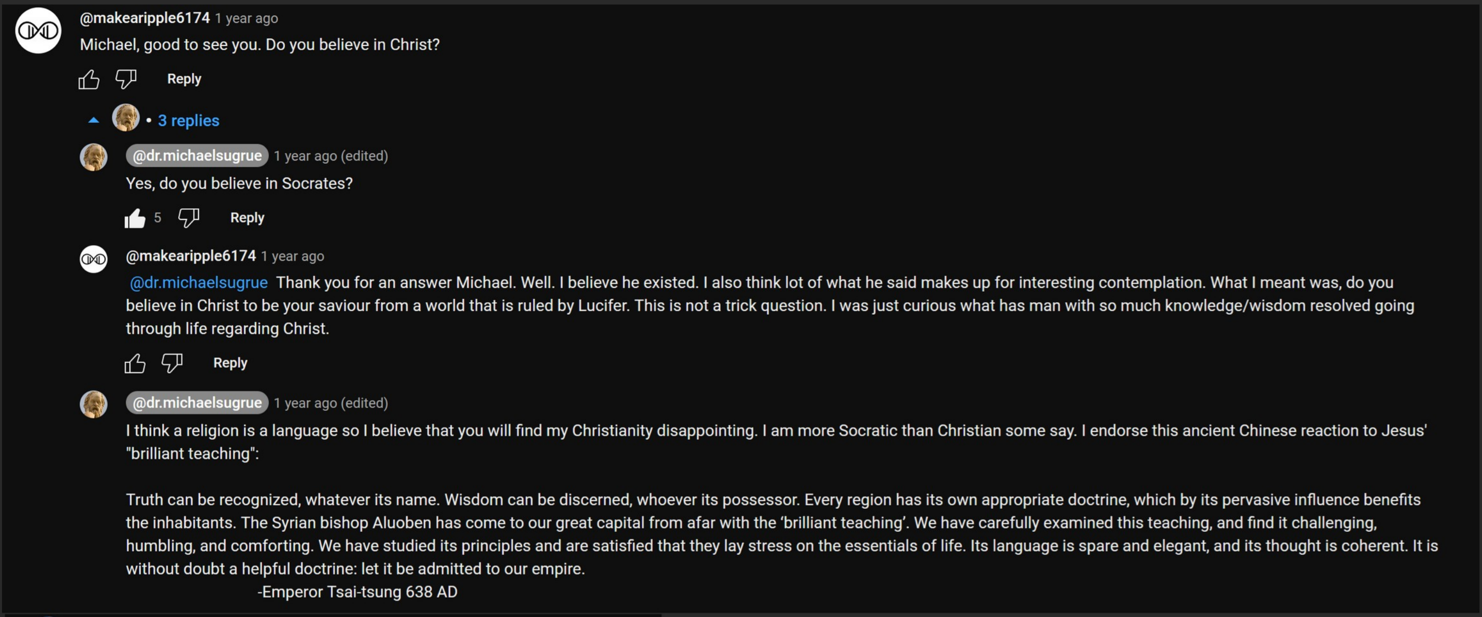
@danielleach9432 1 year ago

I like these 3 together. Three is a good number!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I like the three stooges.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep. 6



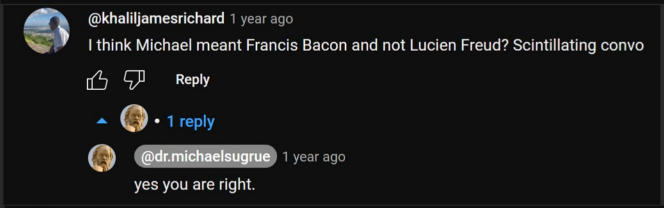
@makearipple6174 1 year ago
Michael, good to see you. Do you believe in Christ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
Yes, do you believe in Socrates?

@makearipple6174 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue Thank you for an answer Michael. Well. I believe he existed. I also think lot of what he said makes up for interesting contemplation. What I meant was, do you believe in Christ to be your saviour from a world that is ruled by Lucifer. This is not a trick question. I was just curious what has man with so much knowledge/wisdom resolved going through life regarding Christ.

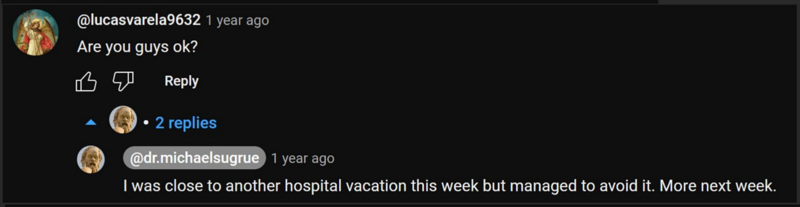
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
I think a religion is a language so I believe that you will find my Christianity disappointing. I am more Socratic than Christian some say. I endorse this ancient Chinese reaction to Jesus' "brilliant teaching":

Truth can be recognized, whatever its name. Wisdom can be discerned, whoever its possessor. Every region has its own appropriate doctrine, which by its pervasive influence benefits the inhabitants. The Syrian bishop Aluoben has come to our great capital from afar with the 'brilliant teaching'. We have carefully examined this teaching, and find it challenging, humbling, and comforting. We have studied its principles and are satisfied that they lay stress on the essentials of life. Its language is spare and elegant, and its thought is coherent. It is without doubt a helpful doctrine: let it be admitted to our empire.
-Emperor Tsai-tsung 638 AD



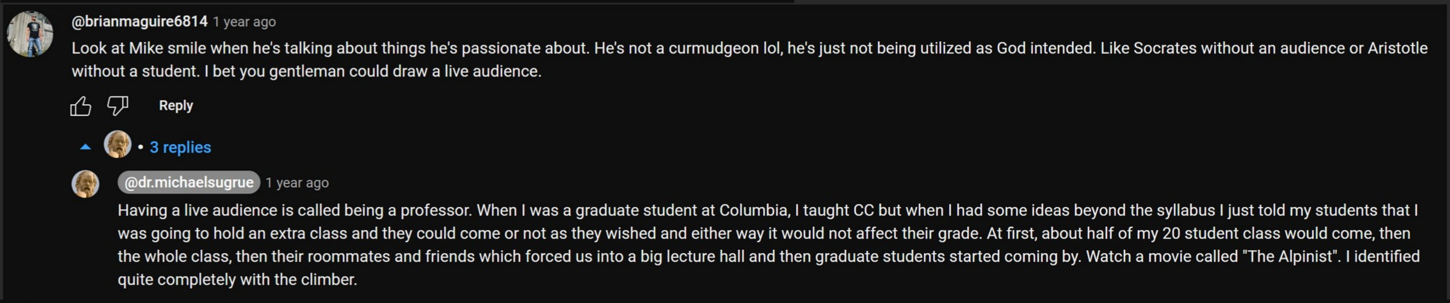
@khaliljamesrichard 1 year ago
I think Michael meant Francis Bacon and not Lucien Freud? Scintillating convo

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
yes you are right.



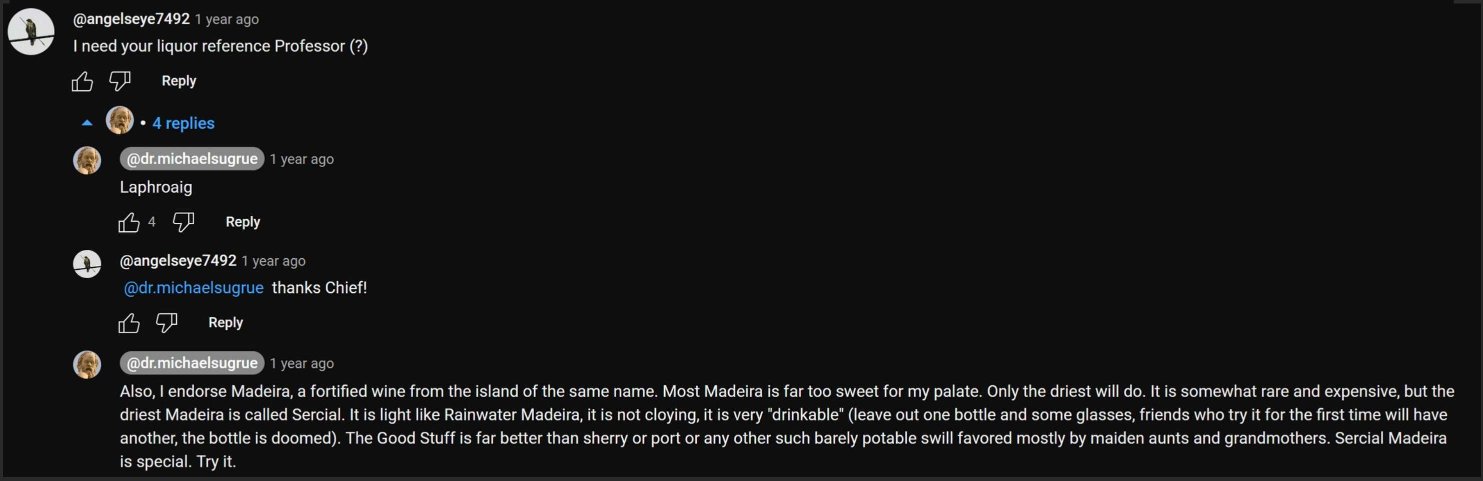
@lucasvarela9632 1 year ago
Are you guys ok?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
I was close to another hospital vacation this week but managed to avoid it. More next week.



@brianmaguire6814 1 year ago
Look at Mike smile when he's talking about things he's passionate about. He's not a curmudgeon lol, he's just not being utilized as God intended. Like Socrates without an audience or Aristotle without a student. I bet you gentleman could draw a live audience.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Having a live audience is called being a professor. When I was a graduate student at Columbia, I taught CC but when I had some ideas beyond the syllabus I just told my students that I was going to hold an extra class and they could come or not as they wished and either way it would not affect their grade. At first, about half of my 20 student class would come, then the whole class, then their roommates and friends which forced us into a big lecture hall and then graduate students started coming by. Watch a movie called "The Alpinist". I identified quite completely with the climber.

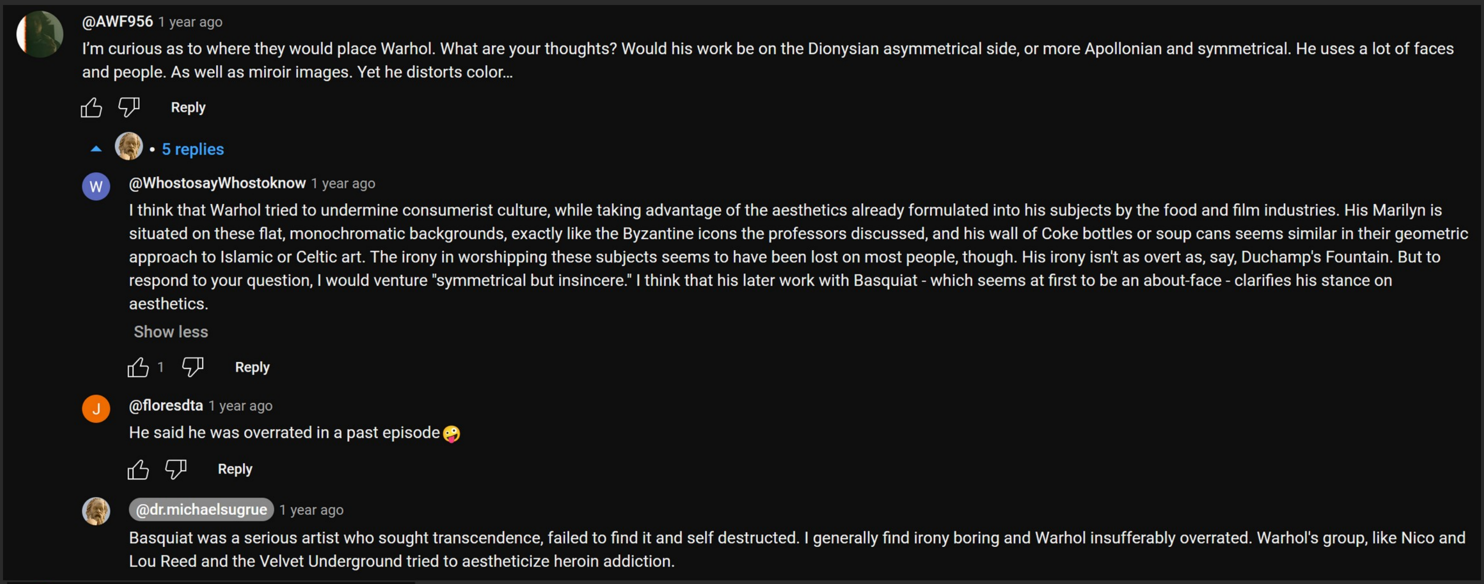


@angelseye7492 1 year ago
I need your liquor reference Professor (?)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Laphroaig

@angelseye7492 1 year ago
@dr.michaelsugrue thanks Chief!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
Also, I endorse Madeira, a fortified wine from the island of the same name. Most Madeira is far too sweet for my palate. Only the driest will do. It is somewhat rare and expensive, but the driest Madeira is called Sercial. It is light like Rainwater Madeira, it is not cloying, it is very "drinkable" (leave out one bottle and some glasses, friends who try it for the first time will have another, the bottle is doomed). The Good Stuff is far better than sherry or port or any other such barely potable swill favored mostly by maiden aunts and grandmothers. Sercial Madeira is special. Try it.



@AWF956 1 year ago

I'm curious as to where they would place Warhol. What are your thoughts? Would his work be on the Dionysian asymmetrical side, or more Apollonian and symmetrical. He uses a lot of faces and people. As well as miroir images. Yet he distorts color...

@WhostosayWhostoknow 1 year ago

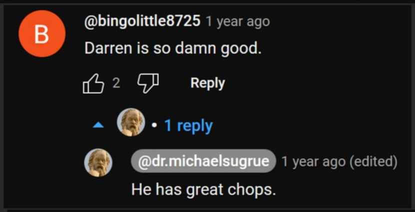
I think that Warhol tried to undermine consumerist culture, while taking advantage of the aesthetics already formulated into his subjects by the food and film industries. His Marilyn is situated on these flat, monochromatic backgrounds, exactly like the Byzantine icons the professors discussed, and his wall of Coke bottles or soup cans seems similar in their geometric approach to Islamic or Celtic art. The irony in worshipping these subjects seems to have been lost on most people, though. His irony isn't as overt as, say, Duchamp's Fountain. But to respond to your question, I would venture "symmetrical but insincere." I think that his later work with Basquiat - which seems at first to be an about-face - clarifies his stance on aesthetics.

@floresdta 1 year ago

He said he was overrated in a past episode😜

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Basquiat was a serious artist who sought transcendence, failed to find it and self destructed. I generally find irony boring and Warhol insufferably overrated. Warhol's group, like Nico and Lou Reed and the Velvet Underground tried to aestheticize heroin addiction.

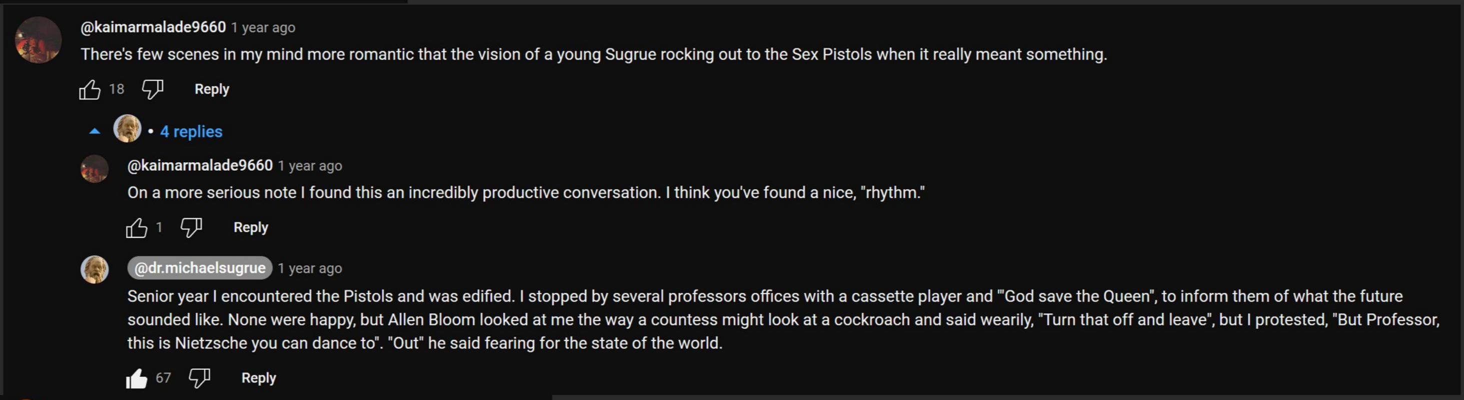


@bingolittle8725 1 year ago

Darren is so damn good.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

He has great chops.



@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago

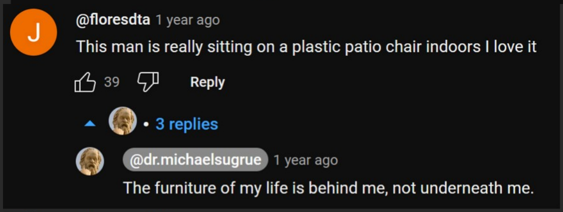
There's few scenes in my mind more romantic that the vision of a young Sugrue rocking out to the Sex Pistols when it really meant something.

@kaimarmalade9660 1 year ago

On a more serious note I found this an incredibly productive conversation. I think you've found a nice, "rhythm."

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Senior year I encountered the Pistols and was edified. I stopped by several professors offices with a cassette player and "God save the Queen", to inform them of what the future sounded like. None were happy, but Allen Bloom looked at me the way a countess might look at a cockroach and said wearily, "Turn that off and leave", but I protested, "But Professor, this is Nietzsche you can dance to". "Out" he said fearing for the state of the world.

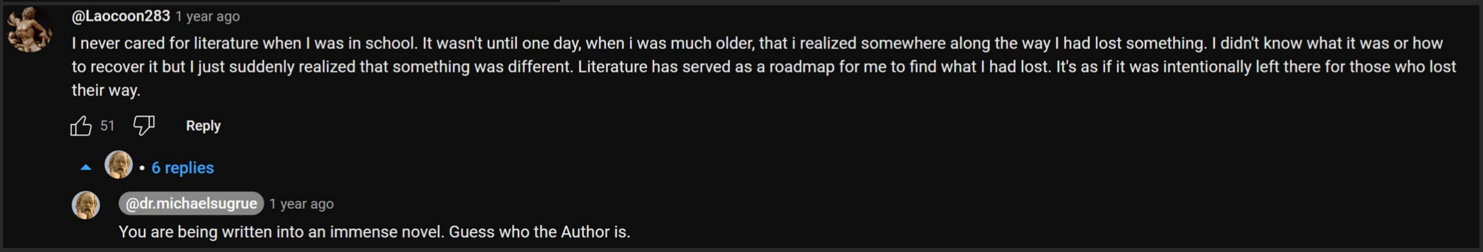


@floresdta 1 year ago

This man is really sitting on a plastic patio chair indoors I love it

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

The furniture of my life is behind me, not underneath me.



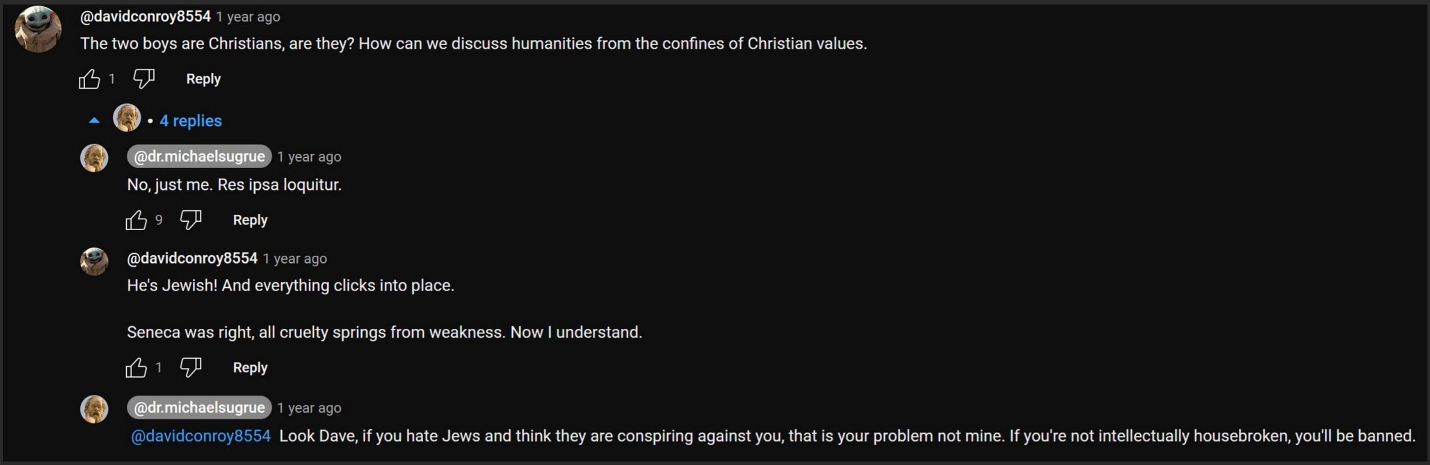
@Laocoon283 1 year ago

I never cared for literature when I was in school. It wasn't until one day, when i was much older, that i realized somewhere along the way I had lost something. I didn't know what it was or how to recover it but I just suddenly realized that something was different. Literature has served as a roadmap for me to find what I had lost. It's as if it was intentionally left there for those who lost their way.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are being written into an immense novel. Guess who the Author is.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep. 7



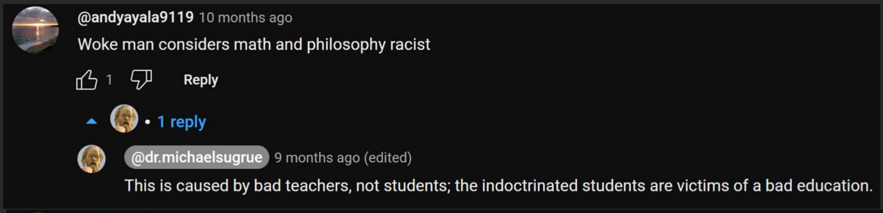
@davidconroy8554 1 year ago
The two boys are Christians, are they? How can we discuss humanities from the confines of Christian values.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
No, just me. Res ipsa loquitur.

@davidconroy8554 1 year ago
He's Jewish! And everything clicks into place.

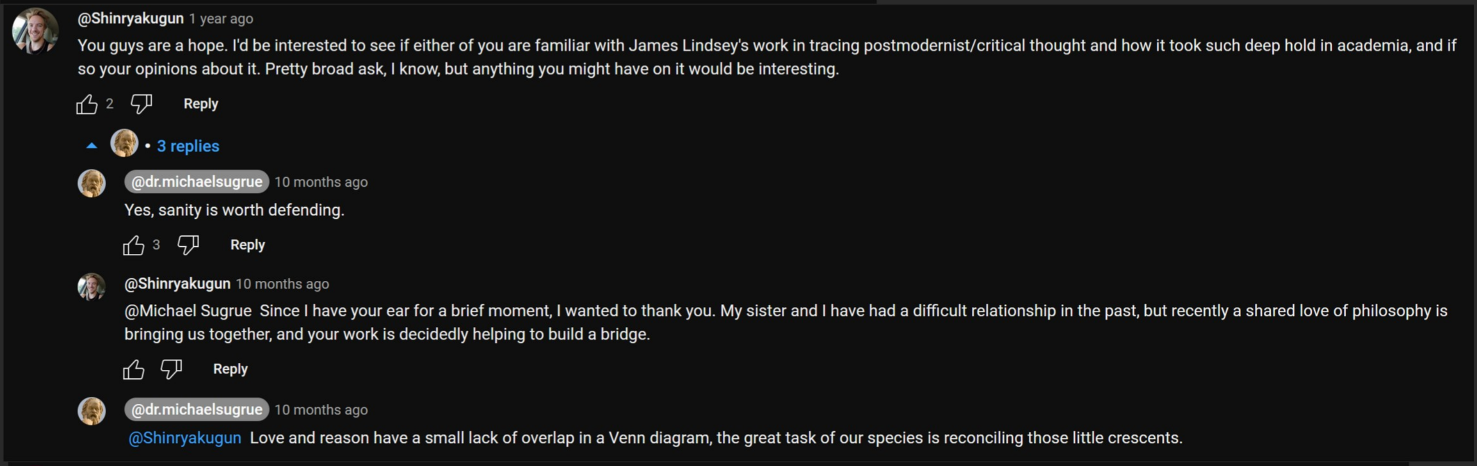
Seneca was right, all cruelty springs from weakness. Now I understand.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
@davidconroy8554 Look Dave, if you hate Jews and think they are conspiring against you, that is your problem not mine. If you're not intellectually housebroken, you'll be banned.



@andyayala9119 10 months ago
Woke man considers math and philosophy racist

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)
This is caused by bad teachers, not students; the indoctrinated students are victims of a bad education.

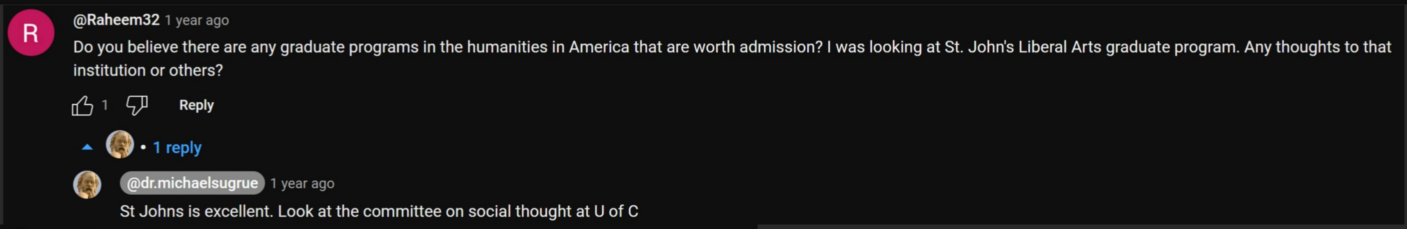


@Shinryakugun 1 year ago
You guys are a hope. I'd be interested to see if either of you are familiar with James Lindsey's work in tracing postmodernist/critical thought and how it took such deep hold in academia, and if so your opinions about it. Pretty broad ask, I know, but anything you might have on it would be interesting.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
Yes, sanity is worth defending.

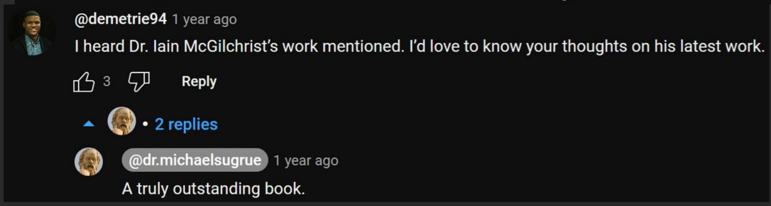
@Shinryakugun 10 months ago
@Michael Sugrue Since I have your ear for a brief moment, I wanted to thank you. My sister and I have had a difficult relationship in the past, but recently a shared love of philosophy is bringing us together, and your work is decidedly helping to build a bridge.

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago
@Shinryakugun Love and reason have a small lack of overlap in a Venn diagram, the great task of our species is reconciling those little crescents.



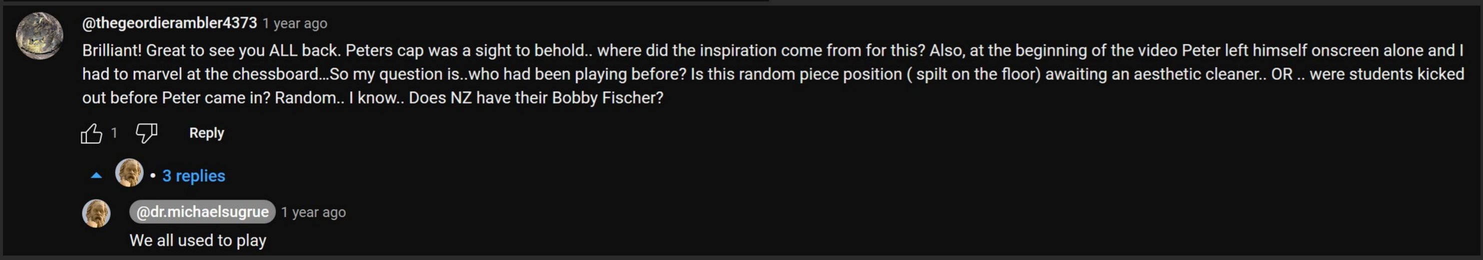
@Raheem32 1 year ago
Do you believe there are any graduate programs in the humanities in America that are worth admission? I was looking at St. John's Liberal Arts graduate program. Any thoughts to that institution or others?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
St Johns is excellent. Look at the committee on social thought at U of C



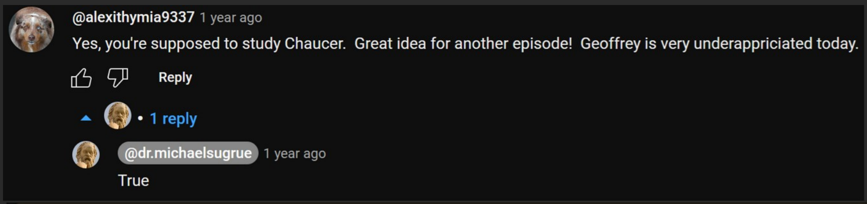
@demetrie94 1 year ago
I heard Dr. Iain McGilchrist's work mentioned. I'd love to know your thoughts on his latest work.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
A truly outstanding book.



@thegeordierambler4373 1 year ago
Brilliant! Great to see you ALL back. Peters cap was a sight to behold.. where did the inspiration come from for this? Also, at the beginning of the video Peter left himself onscreen alone and I had to marvel at the chessboard...So my question is..who had been playing before? Is this random piece position (spilt on the floor) awaiting an aesthetic cleaner.. OR .. were students kicked out before Peter came in? Random.. I know.. Does NZ have their Bobby Fischer?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
We all used to play

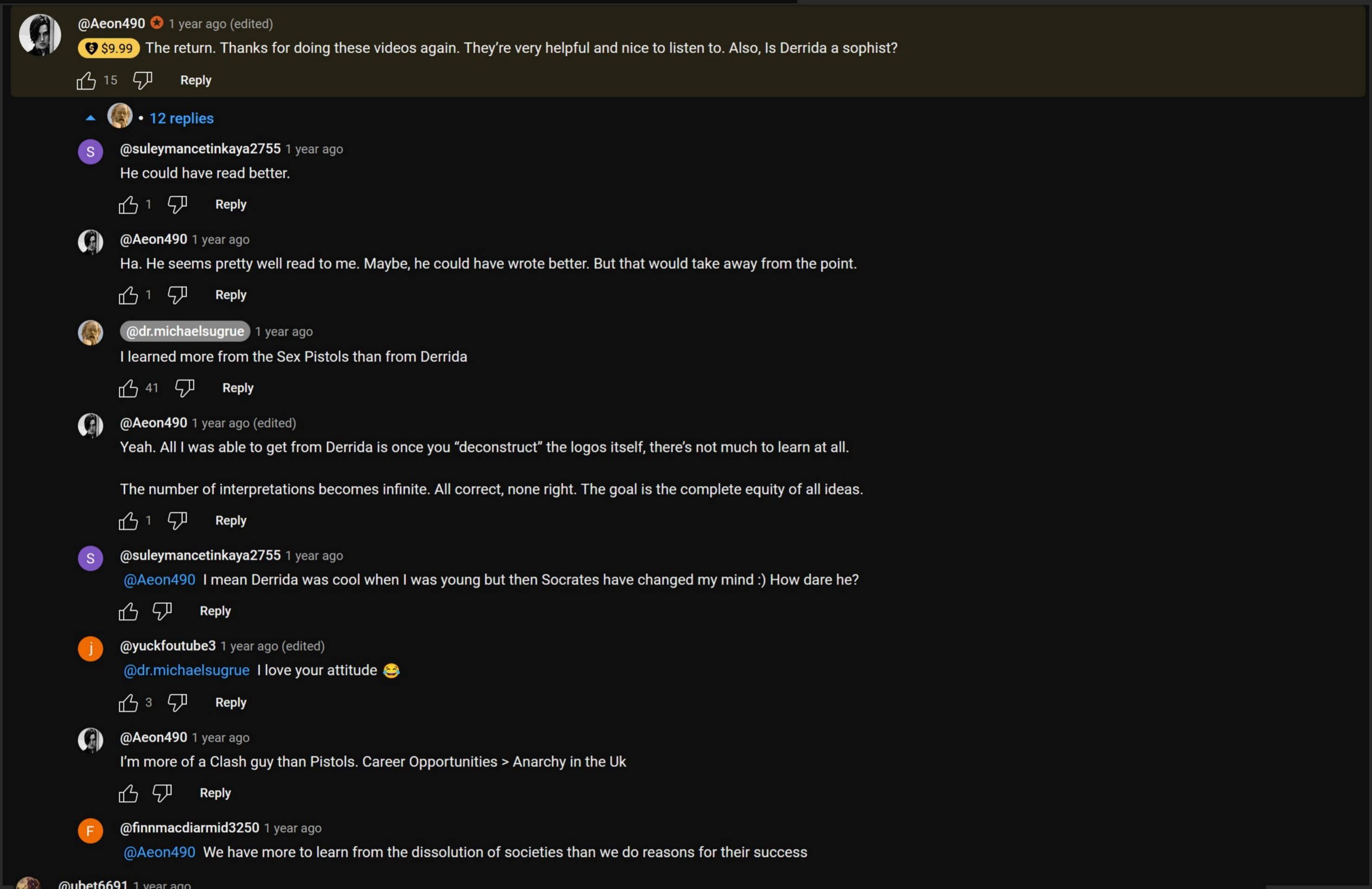


@alexithymia9337 1 year ago

Yes, you're supposed to study Chaucer. Great idea for another episode! Geoffrey is very underappriciated today.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

True



@Aeon490 1 year ago (edited)

$9.99 The return. Thanks for doing these videos again. They're very helpful and nice to listen to. Also, Is Derrida a sophist?

@suleymancetinkaya2755 1 year ago

He could have read better.

@Aeon490 1 year ago

Ha. He seems pretty well read to me. Maybe, he could have wrote better. But that would take away from the point.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I learned more from the Sex Pistols than from Derrida

@Aeon490 1 year ago (edited)

Yeah. All I was able to get from Derrida is once you "deconstruct" the logos itself, there's not much to learn at all.

The number of interpretations becomes infinite. All correct, none right. The goal is the complete equity of all ideas.

@suleymancetinkaya2755 1 year ago

@Aeon490 I mean Derrida was cool when I was young but then Socrates have changed my mind :) How dare he?

@yuckfoutube3 1 year ago (edited)

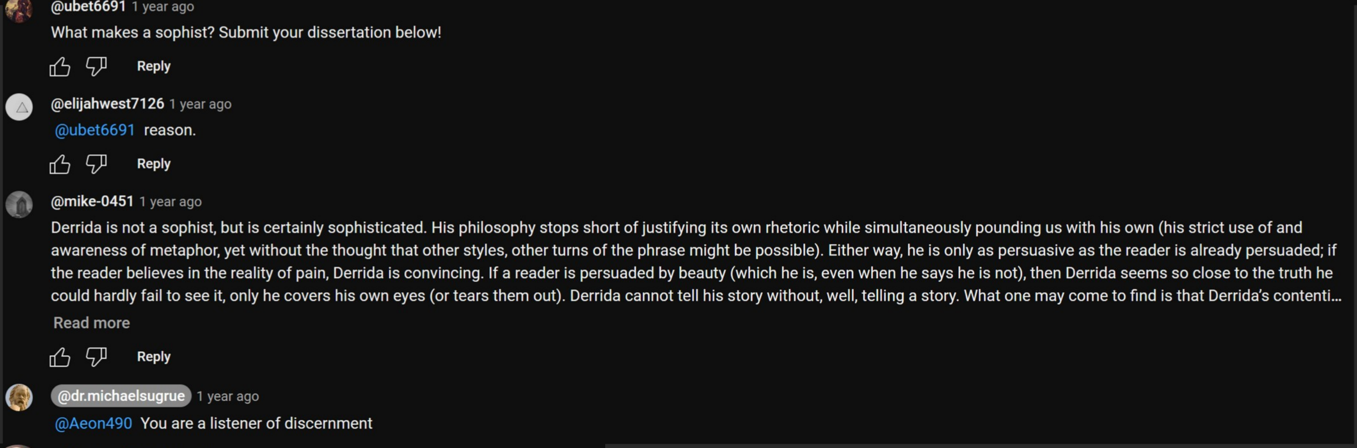
@dr.michaelsugrue I love your attitude 😂

@Aeon490 1 year ago

I'm more of a Clash guy than Pistols. Career Opportunities > Anarchy in the Uk

@finnmacdiarmid3250 1 year ago

@Aeon490 We have more to learn from the dissolution of societies than we do reasons for their success



@ubet6691 1 year ago

What makes a sophist? Submit your dissertation below!

@elijahwest7126 1 year ago

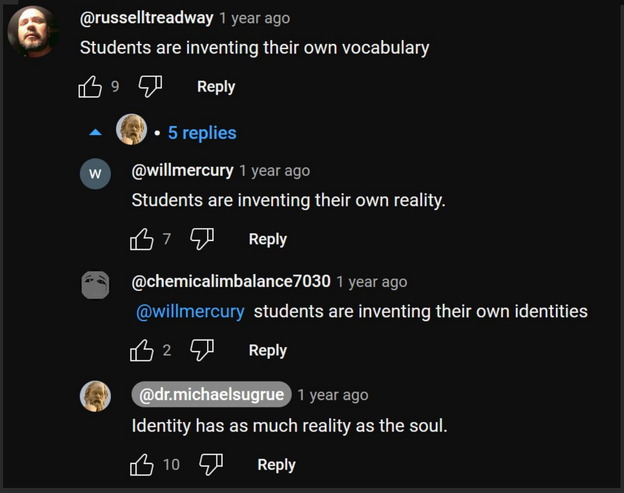
@ubet6691 reason.

@mike-0451 1 year ago

Derrida is not a sophist, but is certainly sophisticated. His philosophy stops short of justifying its own rhetoric while simultaneously pounding us with his own (his strict use of and awareness of metaphor, yet without the thought that other styles, other turns of the phrase might be possible). Either way, he is only as persuasive as the reader is already persuaded; if the reader believes in the reality of pain, Derrida is convincing. If a reader is persuaded by beauty (which he is, even when he says he is not), then Derrida seems so close to the truth he could hardly fail to see it, only he covers his own eyes (or tears them out). Derrida cannot tell his story without, well, telling a story. What one may come to find is that Derrida's contenti...

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@Aeon490 You are a listener of discernment



@russelltreadway 1 year ago

Students are inventing their own vocabulary

@willmercury 1 year ago

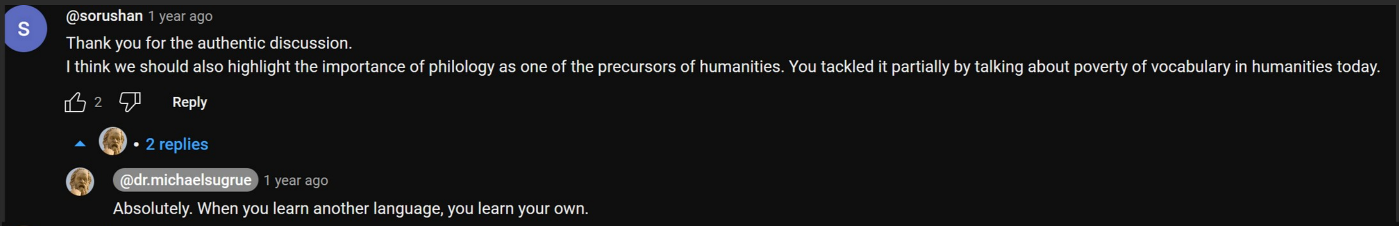
Students are inventing their own reality.

@chemicalimbalance7030 1 year ago

@willmercury students are inventing their own identities

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Identity has as much reality as the soul.

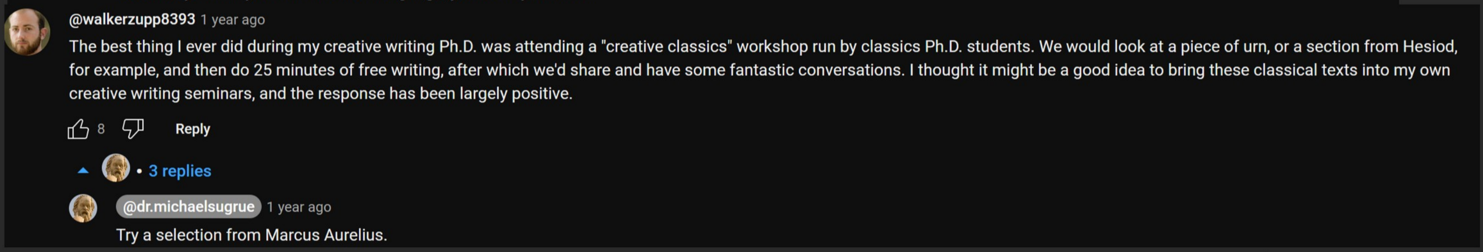


@sorushan 1 year ago

Thank you for the authentic discussion.
I think we should also highlight the importance of philology as one of the precursors of humanities. You tackled it partially by talking about poverty of vocabulary in humanities today.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Absolutely. When you learn another language, you learn your own.

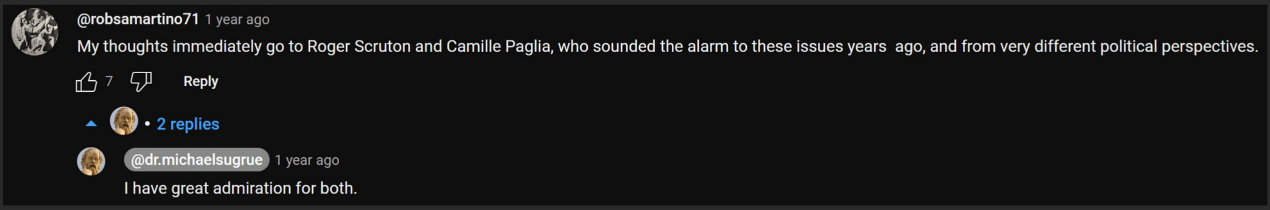


@walkerzupp8393 1 year ago

The best thing I ever did during my creative writing Ph.D. was attending a "creative classics" workshop run by classics Ph.D. students. We would look at a piece of urn, or a section from Hesiod, for example, and then do 25 minutes of free writing, after which we'd share and have some fantastic conversations. I thought it might be a good idea to bring these classical texts into my own creative writing seminars, and the response has been largely positive.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Try a selection from Marcus Aurelius.



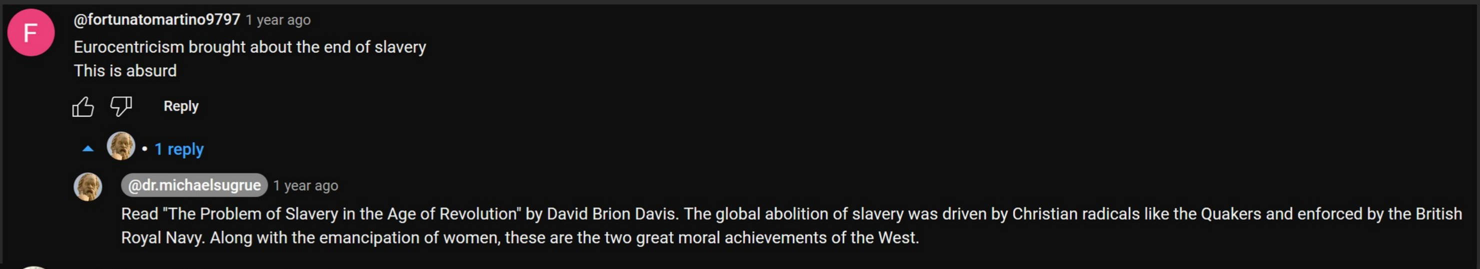
@robsamartino71 1 year ago

My thoughts immediately go to Roger Scruton and Camille Paglia, who sounded the alarm to these issues years ago, and from very different political perspectives.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have great admiration for both.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep.8

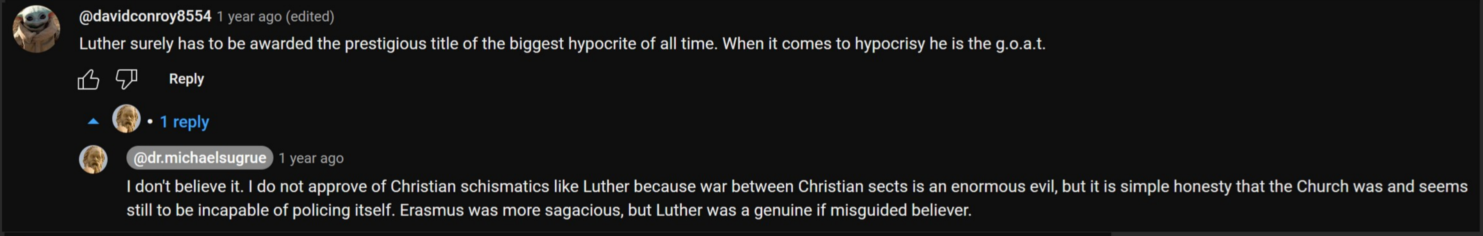


@fortunatomartino9797 1 year ago

Eurocentricism brought about the end of slavery
This is absurd

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Read "The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution" by David Brion Davis. The global abolition of slavery was driven by Christian radicals like the Quakers and enforced by the British Royal Navy. Along with the emancipation of women, these are the two great moral achievements of the West.

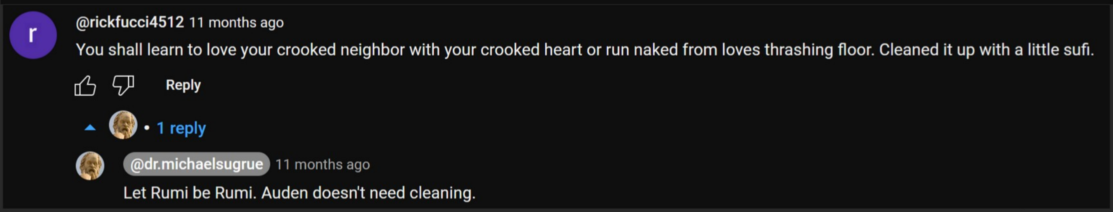


@davidconroy8554 1 year ago (edited)

Luther surely has to be awarded the prestigious title of the biggest hypocrite of all time. When it comes to hypocrisy he is the g.o.a.t.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't believe it. I do not approve of Christian schismatics like Luther because war between Christian sects is an enormous evil, but it is simple honesty that the Church was and seems still to be incapable of policing itself. Erasmus was more sagacious, but Luther was a genuine if misguided believer.

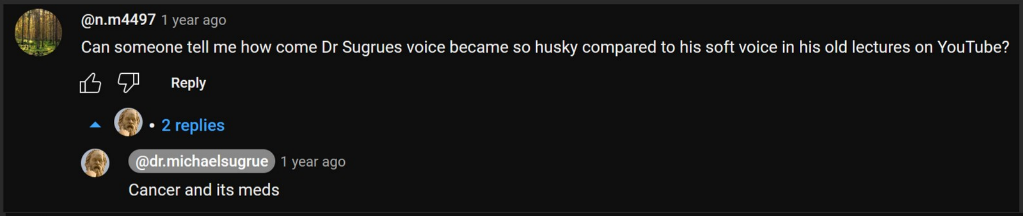


@rickfucci4512 11 months ago

You shall learn to love your crooked neighbor with your crooked heart or run naked from loves thrashing floor. Cleaned it up with a little sufi.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Let Rumi be Rumi. Auden doesn't need cleaning.

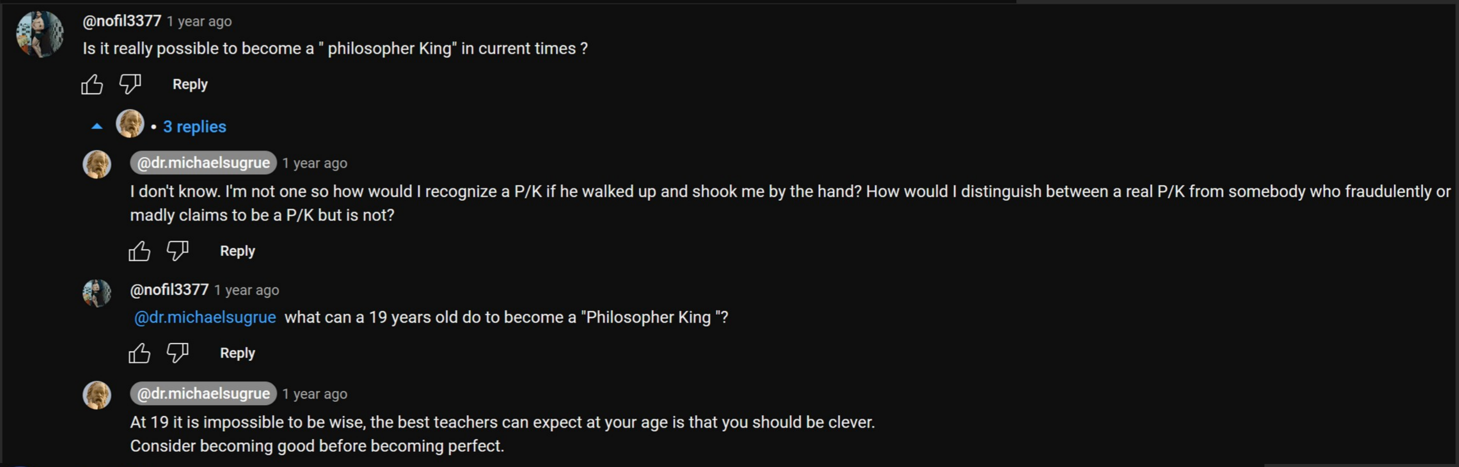


@n.m4497 1 year ago

Can someone tell me how come Dr Sugrues voice became so husky compared to his soft voice in his old lectures on YouTube?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Cancer and its meds



@nofil3377 1 year ago

Is it really possible to become a " philosopher King" in current times ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

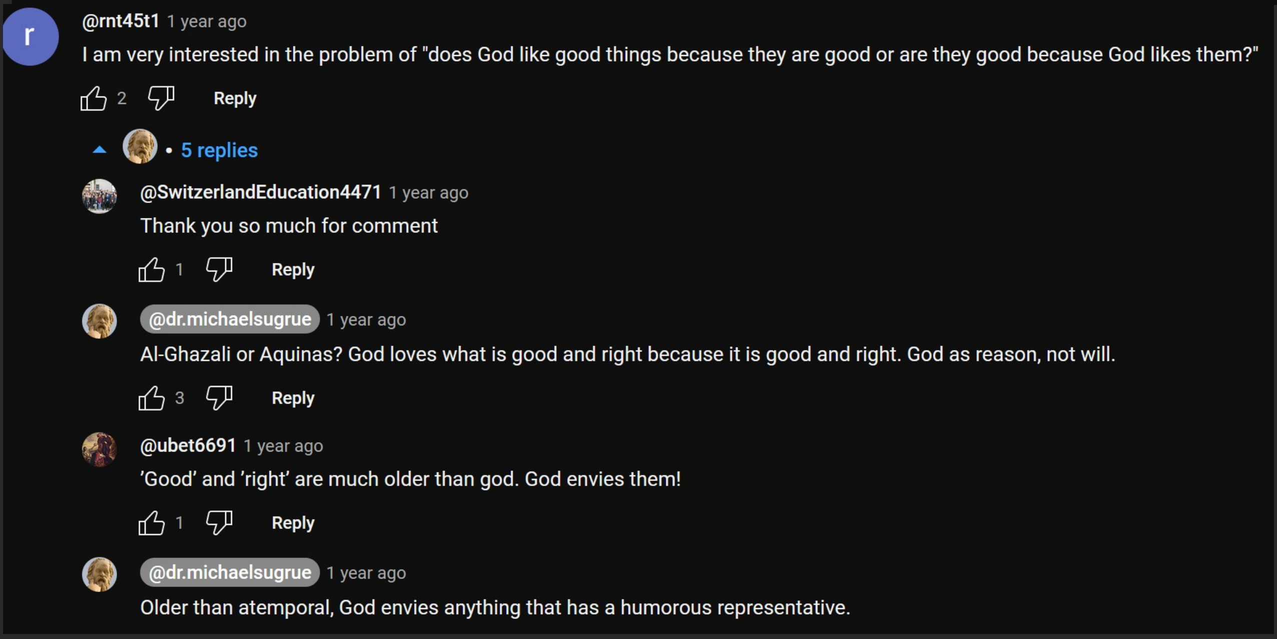
I don't know. I'm not one so how would I recognize a P/K if he walked up and shook me by the hand? How would I distinguish between a real P/K from somebody who fraudulently or madly claims to be a P/K but is not?

@nofil3377 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue what can a 19 years old do to become a "Philosopher King "?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

At 19 it is impossible to be wise, the best teachers can expect at your age is that you should be clever.
Consider becoming good before becoming perfect.



@rnt45t1 1 year ago

I am very interested in the problem of "does God like good things because they are good or are they good because God likes them?"

@SwitzerlandEducation4471 1 year ago

Thank you so much for comment

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

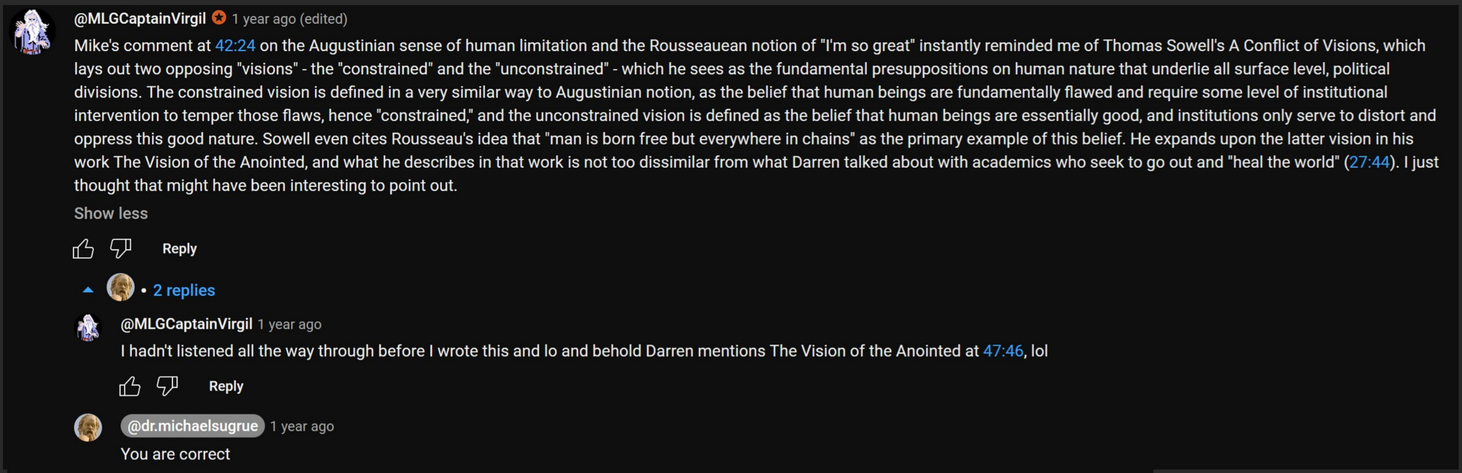
Al-Ghazali or Aquinas? God loves what is good and right because it is good and right. God as reason, not will.

@ubet6691 1 year ago

'Good' and 'right' are much older than god. God envies them!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Older than atemporal, God envies anything that has a humorous representative.



@MLGCaptainVirgil 1 year ago (edited)

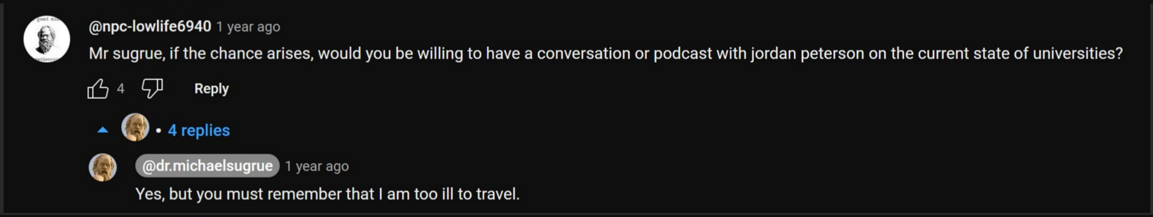
Mike's comment at 42:24 on the Augustinian sense of human limitation and the Rousseauean notion of "I'm so great" instantly reminded me of Thomas Sowell's A Conflict of Visions, which lays out two opposing "visions" - the "constrained" and the "unconstrained" - which he sees as the fundamental presuppositions on human nature that underlie all surface level, political divisions. The constrained vision is defined in a very similar way to Augustinian notion, as the belief that human beings are fundamentally flawed and require some level of institutional intervention to temper those flaws, hence "constrained," and the unconstrained vision is defined as the belief that human beings are essentially good, and institutions only serve to distort and oppress this good nature. Sowell even cites Rousseau's idea that "man is born free but everywhere in chains" as the primary example of this belief. He expands upon the latter vision in his work The Vision of the Anointed, and what he describes in that work is not too dissimilar from what Darren talked about with academics who seek to go out and "heal the world" (27:44). I just thought that might have been interesting to point out.

@MLGCaptainVirgil 1 year ago

I hadn't listened all the way through before I wrote this and lo and behold Darren mentions The Vision of the Anointed at 47:46, lol

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

You are correct

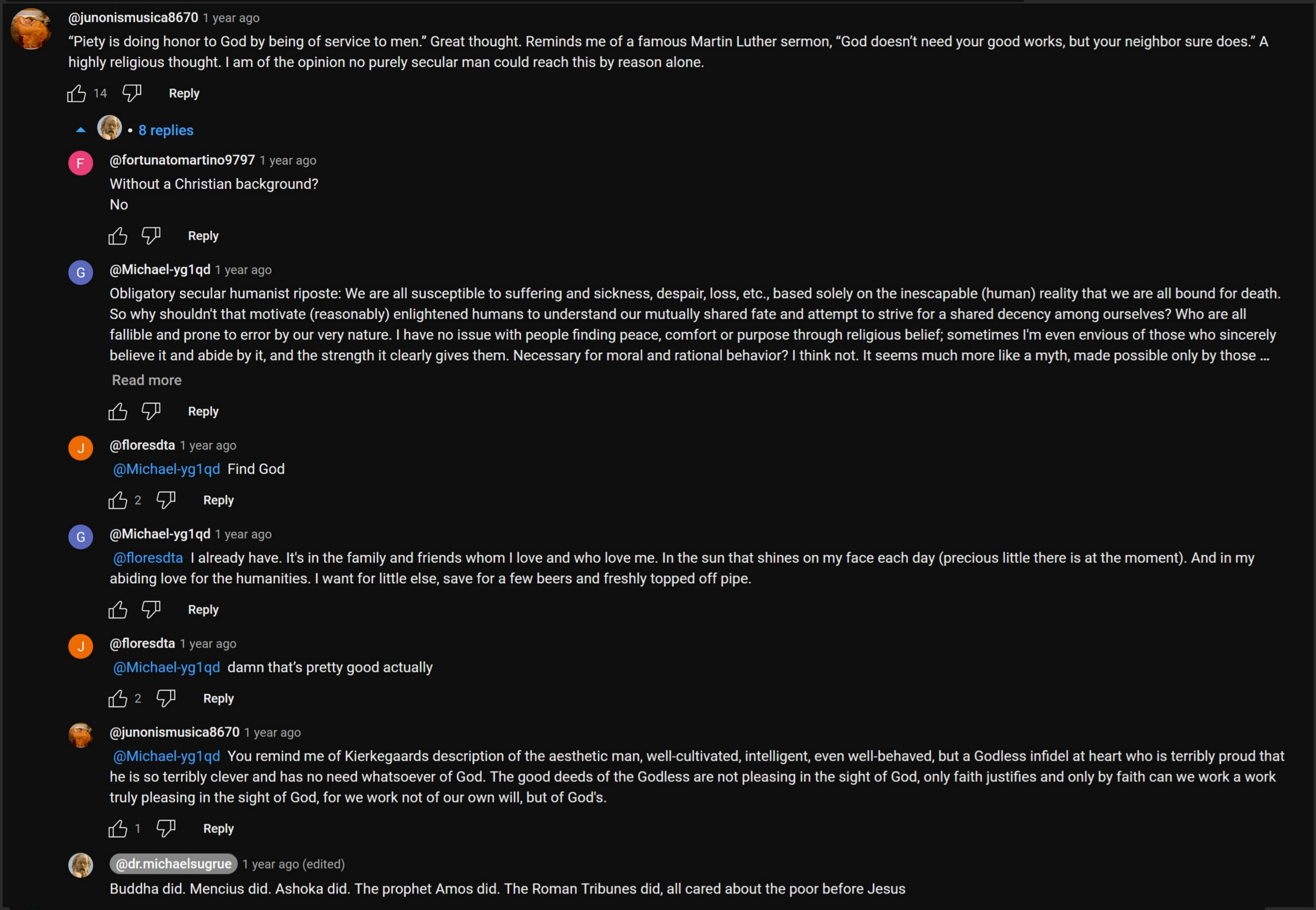


@npc-lowlife6940 1 year ago

Mr sugrue, if the chance arises, would you be willing to have a conversation or podcast with jordan peterson on the current state of universities?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Yes, but you must remember that I am too ill to travel.



@junonismusica8670 1 year ago

“Piety is doing honor to God by being of service to men.” Great thought. Reminds me of a famous Martin Luther sermon, “God doesn't need your good works, but your neighbor sure does.” A highly religious thought. I am of the opinion no purely secular man could reach this by reason alone.

@fortunatomartino9797 1 year ago

Without a Christian background?
No

@Michael-yg1qd 1 year ago

Obligatory secular humanist riposte: We are all susceptible to suffering and sickness, despair, loss, etc., based solely on the inescapable (human) reality that we are all bound for death. So why shouldn't that motivate (reasonably) enlightened humans to understand our mutually shared fate and attempt to strive for a shared decency among ourselves? Who are all fallible and prone to error by our very nature. I have no issue with people finding peace, comfort or purpose through religious belief; sometimes I'm even envious of those who sincerely believe it and abide by it, and the strength it clearly gives them. Necessary for moral and rational behavior? I think not. It seems much more like a myth, made possible only by those ...

@floresdta 1 year ago

@Michael-yg1qd Find God

@Michael-yg1qd 1 year ago

@floresdta I already have. It's in the family and friends whom I love and who love me. In the sun that shines on my face each day (precious little there is at the moment). And in my abiding love for the humanities. I want for little else, save for a few beers and freshly topped off pipe.

@floresdta 1 year ago

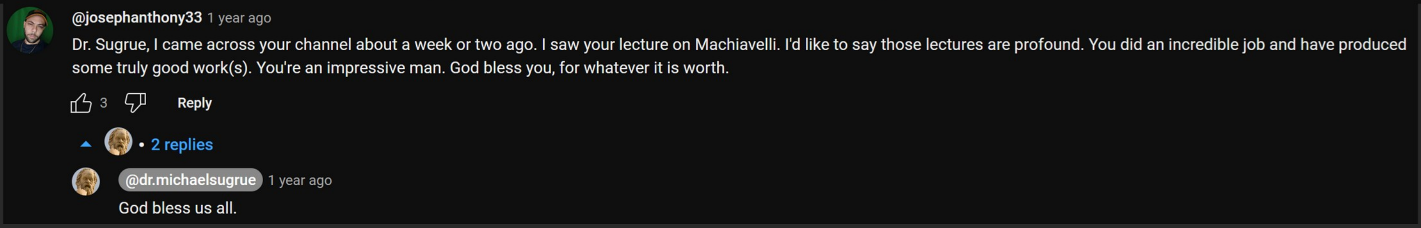
@Michael-yg1qd damn that's pretty good actually

@junonismusica8670 1 year ago

@Michael-yg1qd You remind me of Kierkegaards description of the aesthetic man, well-cultivated, intelligent, even well-behaved, but a Godless infidel at heart who is terribly proud that he is so terribly clever and has no need whatsoever of God. The good deeds of the Godless are not pleasing in the sight of God, only faith justifies and only by faith can we work a work truly pleasing in the sight of God, for we work not of our own will, but of God's.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Buddha did. Mencius did. Ashoka did. The prophet Amos did. The Roman Tribunes did, all cared about the poor before Jesus



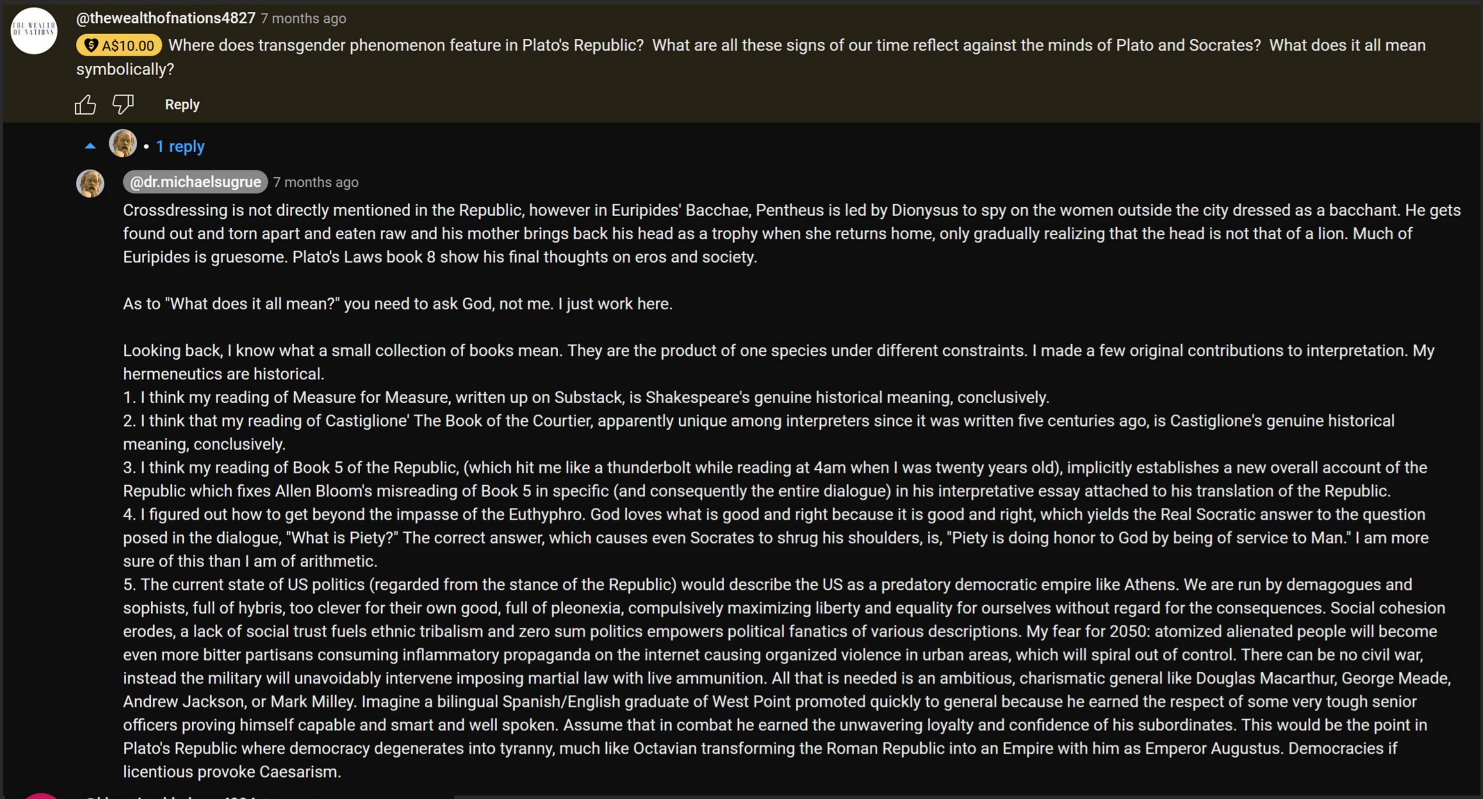
@josephanthony33 1 year ago

Dr. Sugrue, I came across your channel about a week or two ago. I saw your lecture on Machiavelli. I'd like to say those lectures are profound. You did an incredible job and have produced some truly good work(s). You're an impressive man. God bless you, for whatever it is worth.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

God bless us all.

Mike and Darren: Unplugged ep.9


@thewealthofnations4827 7 months ago

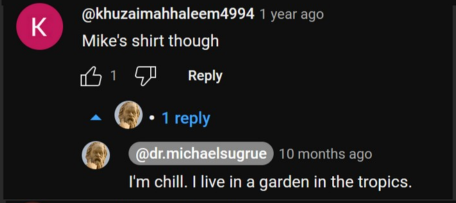
A$10.00 Where does transgender phenomenon feature in Plato's Republic? What are all these signs of our time reflect against the minds of Plato and Socrates? What does it all mean symbolically?

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Crossdressing is not directly mentioned in the Republic, however in Euripides' Bacchae, Pentheus is led by Dionysus to spy on the women outside the city dressed as a bacchant. He gets found out and torn apart and eaten raw and his mother brings back his head as a trophy when she returns home, only gradually realizing that the head is not that of a lion. Much of Euripides is gruesome. Plato's Laws book 8 show his final thoughts on eros and society.

As to "What does it all mean?" you need to ask God, not me. I just work here.

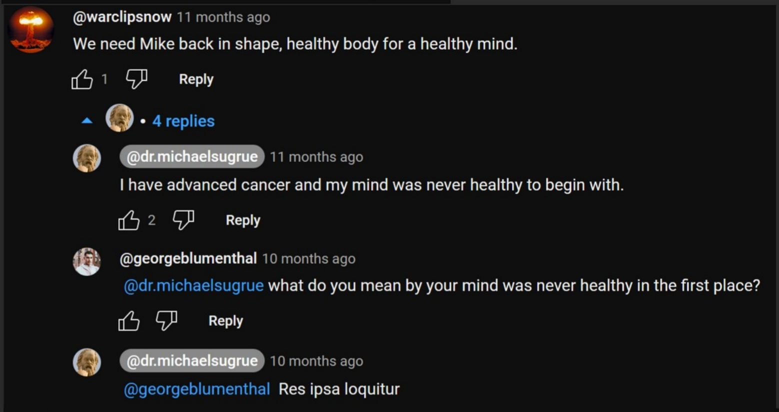
Looking back, I know what a small collection of books mean. They are the product of one species under different constraints. I made a few original contributions to interpretation. My hermeneutics are historical.
1. I think my reading of Measure for Measure, written up on Substack, is Shakespeare's genuine historical meaning, conclusively.
2. I think that my reading of Castiglione' The Book of the Courtier, apparently unique among interpreters since it was written five centuries ago, is Castiglione's genuine historical meaning, conclusively.
3. I think my reading of Book 5 of the Republic, (which hit me like a thunderbolt while reading at 4am when I was twenty years old), implicitly establishes a new overall account of the Republic which fixes Allen Bloom's misreading of Book 5 in specific (and consequently the entire dialogue) in his interpretative essay attached to his translation of the Republic.
4. I figured out how to get beyond the impasse of the Euthyphro. God loves what is good and right because it is good and right, which yields the Real Socratic answer to the question posed in the dialogue, "What is Piety?" The correct answer, which causes even Socrates to shrug his shoulders, is, "Piety is doing honor to God by being of service to Man." I am more sure of this than I am of arithmetic.
5. The current state of US politics (regarded from the stance of the Republic) would describe the US as a predatory democratic empire like Athens. We are run by demagogues and sophists, full of hybris, too clever for their own good, full of pleonexia, compulsively maximizing liberty and equality for ourselves without regard for the consequences. Social cohesion erodes, a lack of social trust fuels ethnic tribalism and zero sum politics empowers political fanatics of various descriptions. My fear for 2050: atomized alienated people will become even more bitter partisans consuming inflammatory propaganda on the internet causing organized violence in urban areas, which will spiral out of control. There can be no civil war, instead the military will unavoidably intervene imposing martial law with live ammunition. All that is needed is an ambitious, charismatic general like Douglas Macarthur, George Meade, Andrew Jackson, or Mark Milley. Imagine a bilingual Spanish/English graduate of West Point promoted quickly to general because he earned the respect of some very tough senior officers proving himself capable and smart and well spoken. Assume that in combat he earned the unwavering loyalty and confidence of his subordinates. This would be the point in Plato's Republic where democracy degenerates into tyranny, much like Octavian transforming the Roman Republic into an Empire with him as Emperor Augustus. Democracies if licentious provoke Caesarism.


@khuzaimahhaleem4994 1 year ago

Mike's shirt though

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

I'm chill. I live in a garden in the tropics.


@warclipsnow 11 months ago

We need Mike back in shape, healthy body for a healthy mind.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

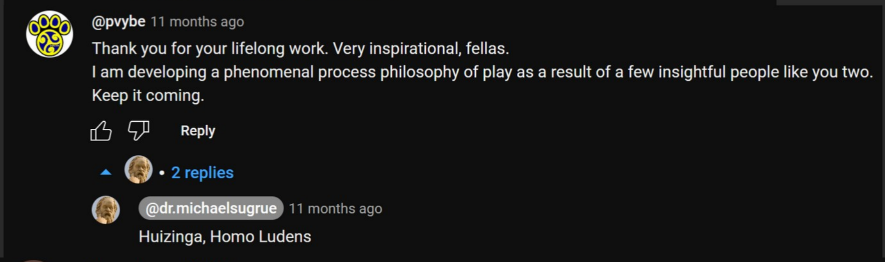
I have advanced cancer and my mind was never healthy to begin with.

@georgeblumenthal 10 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue what do you mean by your mind was never healthy in the first place?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago

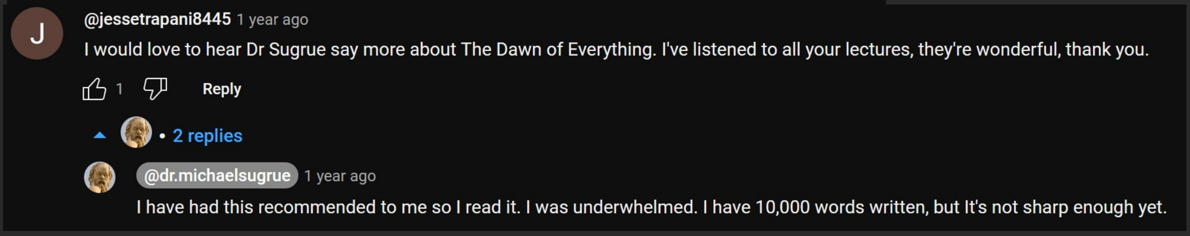
@georgeblumenthal Res ipsa loquitur


@pvybe 11 months ago

Thank you for your lifelong work. Very inspirational, fellas.
I am developing a phenomenal process philosophy of play as a result of a few insightful people like you two.
Keep it coming.

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

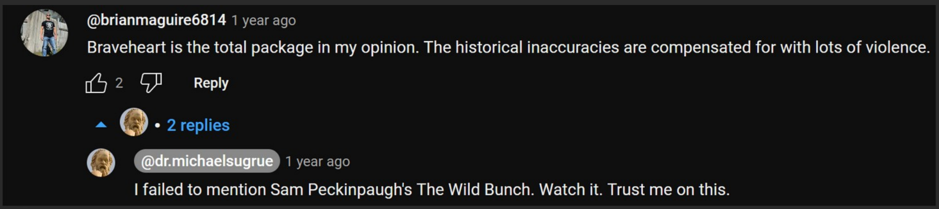
Huizinga, Homo Ludens


@jessetrapani8445 1 year ago

I would love to hear Dr Sugrue say more about The Dawn of Everything. I've listened to all your lectures, they're wonderful, thank you.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I have had this recommended to me so I read it. I was underwhelmed. I have 10,000 words written, but It's not sharp enough yet.

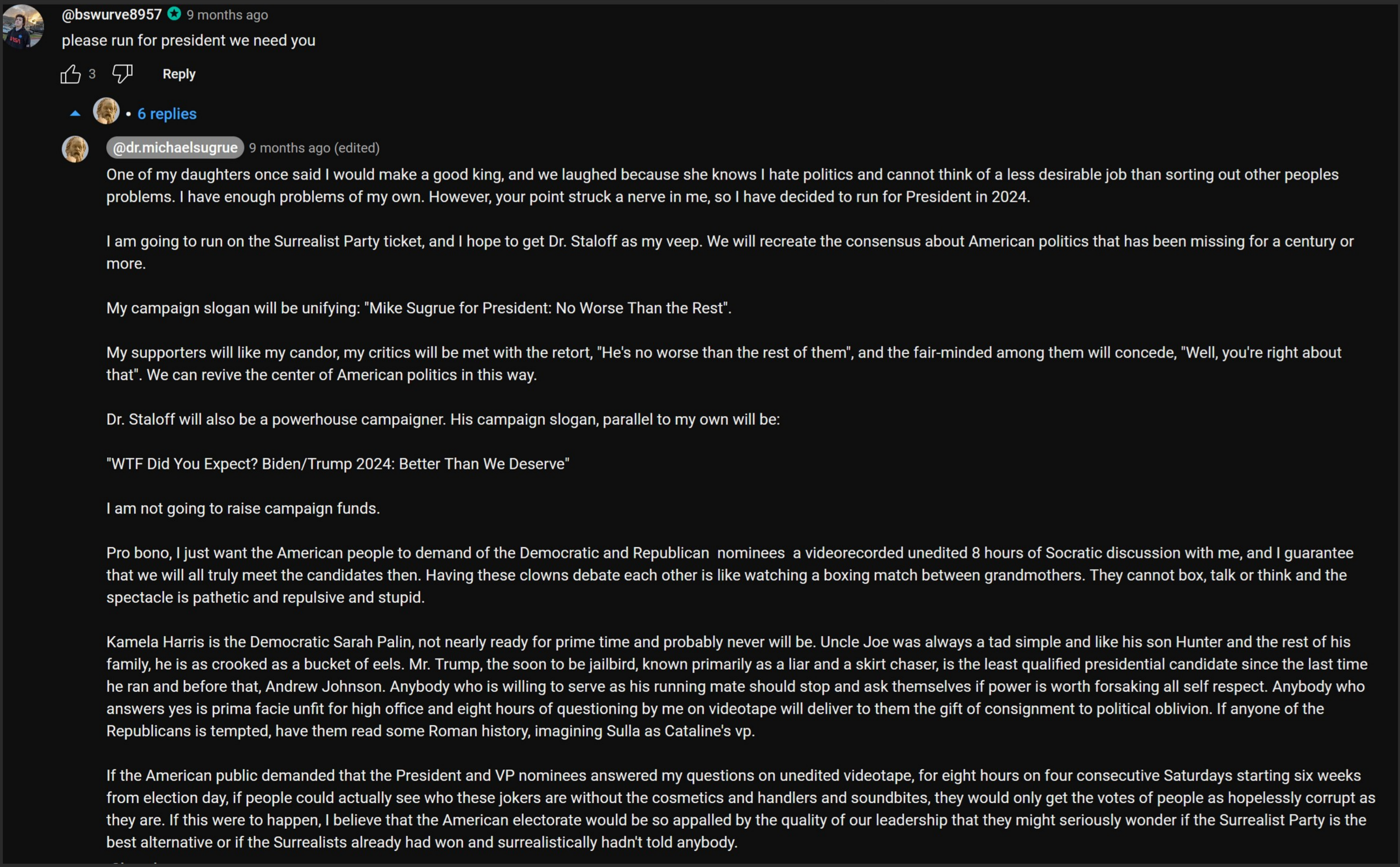


@brianmaguire6814 1 year ago

Braveheart is the total package in my opinion. The historical inaccuracies are compensated for with lots of violence.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I failed to mention Sam Peckinpaugh's The Wild Bunch. Watch it. Trust me on this.



@bswurve8957 9 months ago

please run for president we need you

@dr.michaelsugrue 9 months ago (edited)

One of my daughters once said I would make a good king, and we laughed because she knows I hate politics and cannot think of a less desirable job than sorting out other peoples problems. I have enough problems of my own. However, your point struck a nerve in me, so I have decided to run for President in 2024.

I am going to run on the Surrealist Party ticket, and I hope to get Dr. Staloff as my veep. We will recreate the consensus about American politics that has been missing for a century or more.

My campaign slogan will be unifying: "Mike Sugrue for President: No Worse Than the Rest".

My supporters will like my candor, my critics will be met with the retort, "He's no worse than the rest of them", and the fair-minded among them will concede, "Well, you're right about that". We can revive the center of American politics in this way.

Dr. Staloff will also be a powerhouse campaigner. His campaign slogan, parallel to my own will be:

"WTF Did You Expect? Biden/Trump 2024: Better Than We Deserve"

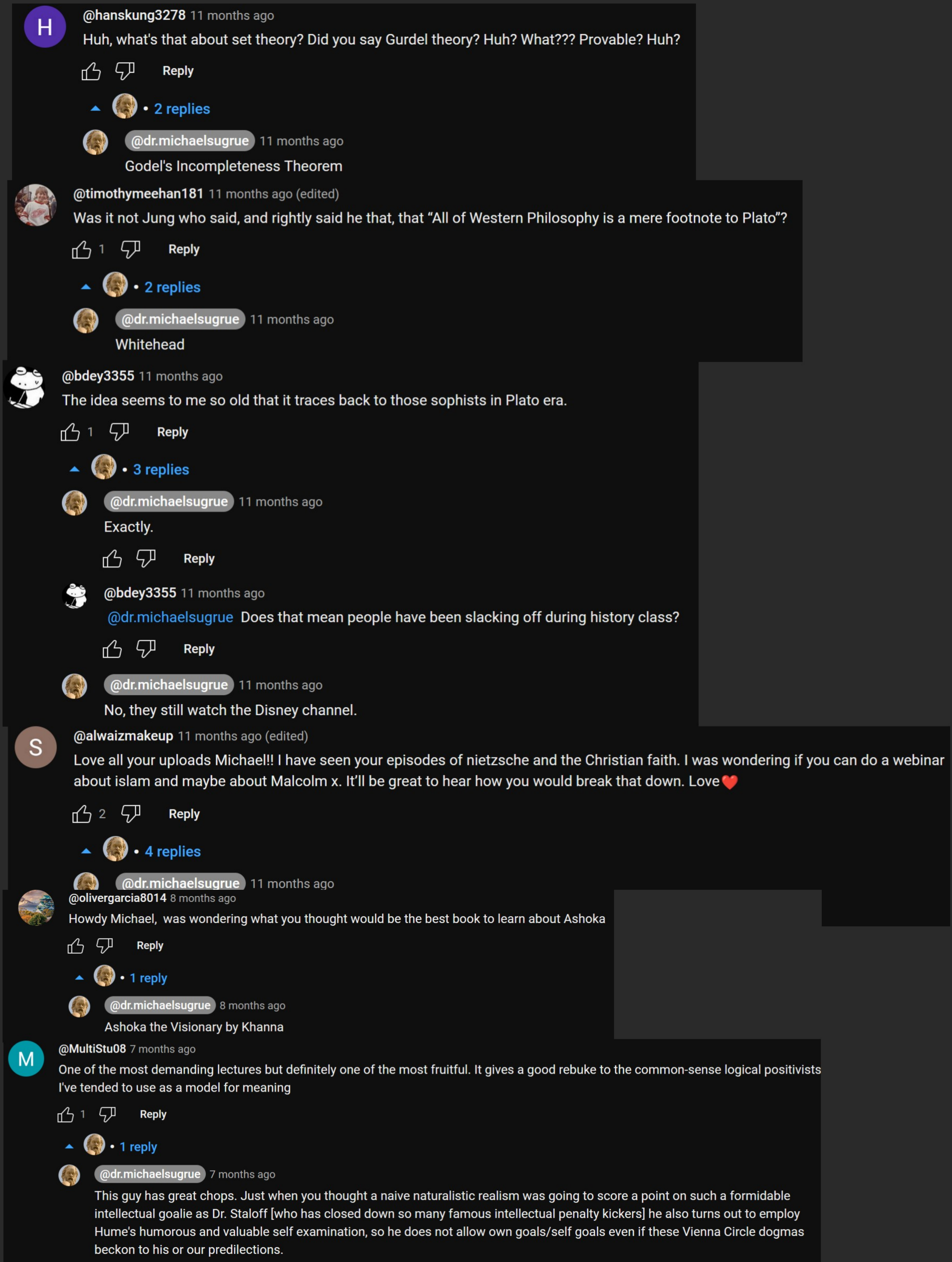
I am not going to raise campaign funds.

Pro bono, I just want the American people to demand of the Democratic and Republican nominees a videorecorded unedited 8 hours of Socratic discussion with me, and I guarantee that we will all truly meet the candidates then. Having these clowns debate each other is like watching a boxing match between grandmothers. They cannot box, talk or think and the spectacle is pathetic and repulsive and stupid.

Kamela Harris is the Democratic Sarah Palin, not nearly ready for prime time and probably never will be. Uncle Joe was always a tad simple and like his son Hunter and the rest of his family, he is as crooked as a bucket of eels. Mr. Trump, the soon to be jailbird, known primarily as a liar and a skirt chaser, is the least qualified presidential candidate since the last time he ran and before that, Andrew Johnson. Anybody who is willing to serve as his running mate should stop and ask themselves if power is worth forsaking all self respect. Anybody who answers yes is prima facie unfit for high office and eight hours of questioning by me on videotape will deliver to them the gift of consignment to political oblivion. If anyone of the Republicans is tempted, have them read some Roman history, imagining Sulla as Cataline's vp.

If the American public demanded that the President and VP nominees answered my questions on unedited videotape, for eight hours on four consecutive Saturdays starting six weeks from election day, if people could actually see who these jokers are without the cosmetics and handlers and soundbites, they would only get the votes of people as hopelessly corrupt as they are. If this were to happen, I believe that the American electorate would be so appalled by the quality of our leadership that they might seriously wonder if the Surrealist Party is the best alternative or if the Surrealists already had won and surrealistically hadn't told anybody.

Quine's Ontological Relativism and the End of Philosophy, Dr. Darren Staloff



@hanskung3278 11 months ago

Huh, what's that about set theory? Did you say Gurdel theory? Huh? What??? Provable? Huh?

Reply

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Godel's Incompleteness Theorem

@timothymeehan181 11 months ago (edited)

Was it not Jung who said, and rightly said he that, that “All of Western Philosophy is a mere footnote to Plato”?

1 Reply

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Whitehead

@bdey3355 11 months ago

The idea seems to me so old that it traces back to those sophists in Plato era.

1 Reply

3 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

Exactly.

Reply

@bdey3355 11 months ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Does that mean people have been slacking off during history class?

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

No, they still watch the Disney channel.

@alwaizmakeup 11 months ago (edited)

Love all your uploads Michael!! I have seen your episodes of nietzsche and the Christian faith. I was wondering if you can do a webinar about islam and maybe about Malcolm x. It’ll be great to hear how you would break that down. Love❤️

2 Reply

4 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 11 months ago

@olivergarcia8014 8 months ago

Howdy Michael, was wondering what you thought would be the best book to learn about Ashoka

Reply

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Ashoka the Visionary by Khanna

@MultiStu08 7 months ago

One of the most demanding lectures but definitely one of the most fruitful. It gives a good rebuke to the common-sense logical positivists I've tended to use as a model for meaning

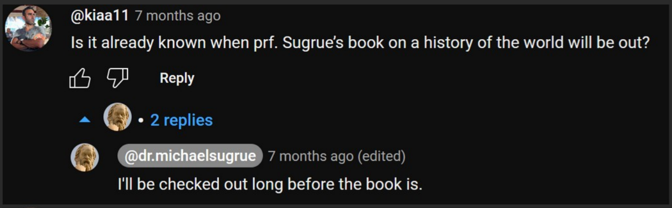
1 Reply

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

This guy has great chops. Just when you thought a naive naturalistic realism was going to score a point on such a formidable intellectual goalie as Dr. Staloff [who has closed down so many famous intellectual penalty kickers] he also turns out to employ Hume's humorous and valuable self examination, so he does not allow own goals/self goals even if these Vienna Circle dogmas beckon to his or our predilections.

Class on Plato's Republic, Open To All. The Greeks and Their Heroes

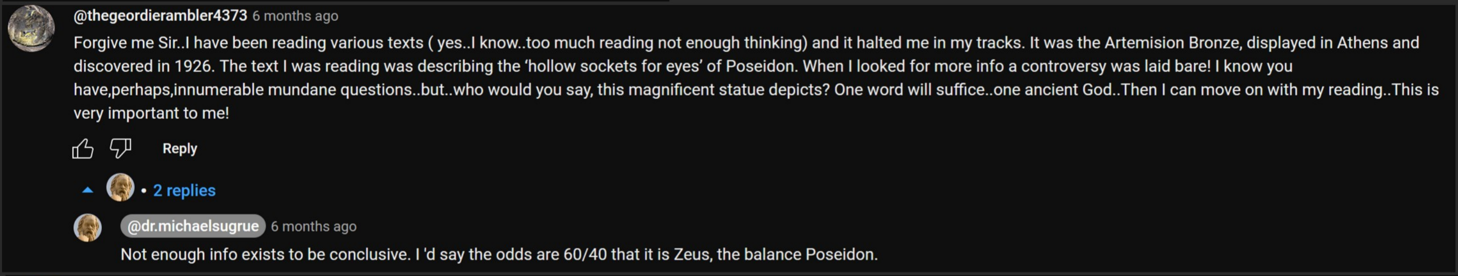


@kiaa11 7 months ago

Is it already known when prf. Sugrue's book on a history of the world will be out?

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

I'll be checked out long before the book is.

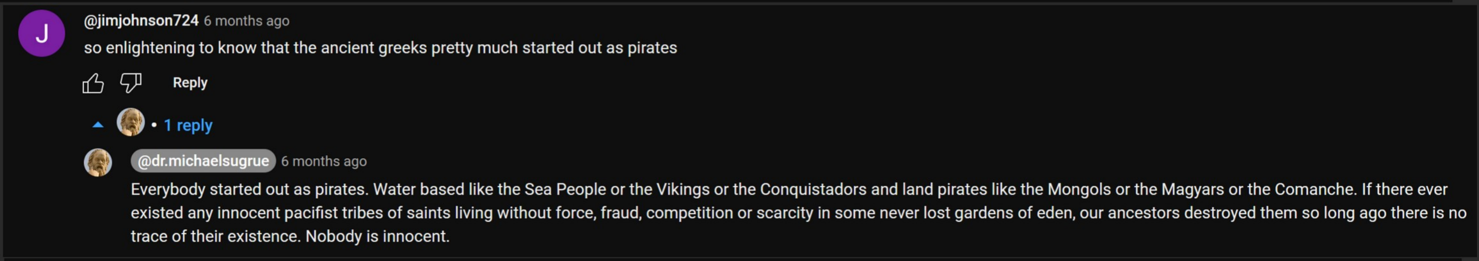


@thegeordierambler4373 6 months ago

Forgive me Sir..I have been reading various texts (yes..I know..too much reading not enough thinking) and it halted me in my tracks. It was the Artemision Bronze, displayed in Athens and discovered in 1926. The text I was reading was describing the 'hollow sockets for eyes' of Poseidon. When I looked for more info a controversy was laid bare! I know you have,perhaps,innumerable mundane questions..but..who would you say, this magnificent statue depicts? One word will suffice..one ancient God..Then I can move on with my reading..This is very important to me!

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Not enough info exists to be conclusive. I 'd say the odds are 60/40 that it is Zeus, the balance Poseidon.

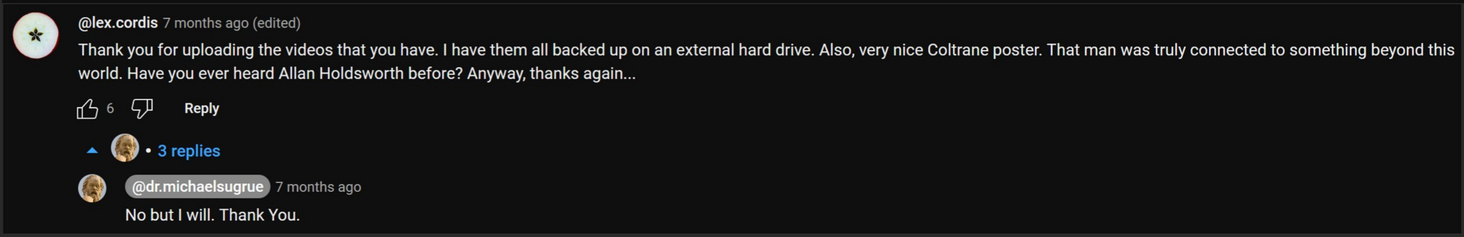


@jimjohnson724 6 months ago

so enlightening to know that the ancient greeks pretty much started out as pirates

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Everybody started out as pirates. Water based like the Sea People or the Vikings or the Conquistadors and land pirates like the Mongols or the Magyars or the Comanche. If there ever existed any innocent pacifist tribes of saints living without force, fraud, competition or scarcity in some never lost gardens of eden, our ancestors destroyed them so long ago there is no trace of their existence. Nobody is innocent.



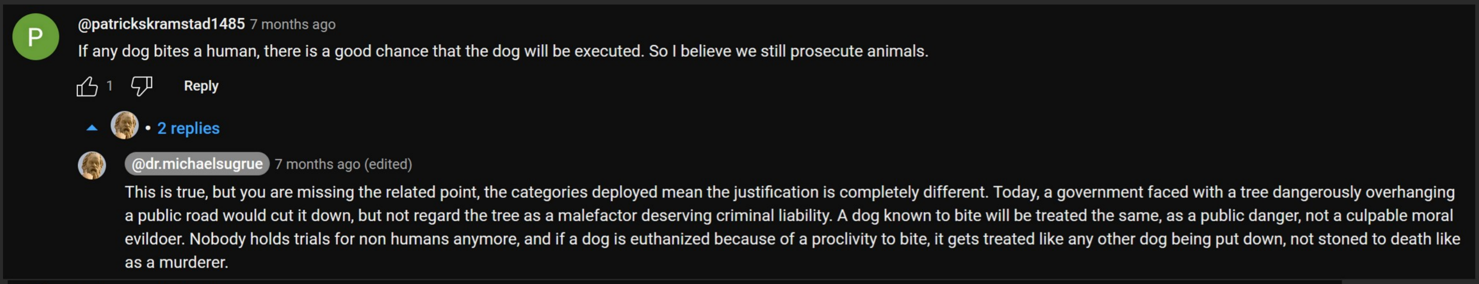
@lex.cordis 7 months ago (edited)

Thank you for uploading the videos that you have. I have them all backed up on an external hard drive. Also, very nice Coltrane poster. That man was truly connected to something beyond this world. Have you ever heard Allan Holdsworth before? Anyway, thanks again...

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

No but I will. Thank You.

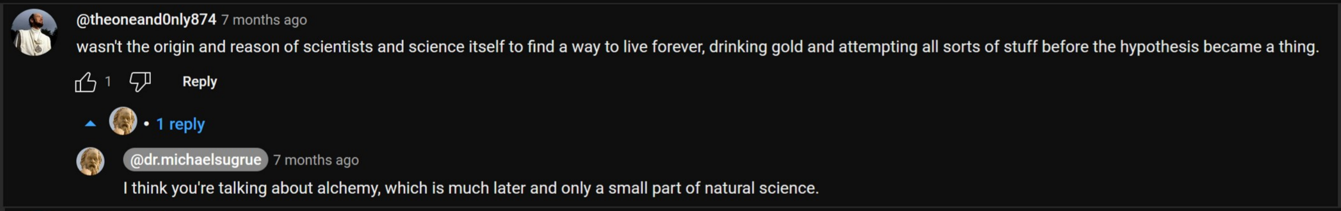
Sugrue's Thoughts on the Origins of Science MD1 - Open Class for Medical Workers and Doctors


@patrickskramstad1485 7 months ago

If any dog bites a human, there is a good chance that the dog will be executed. So I believe we still prosecute animals.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

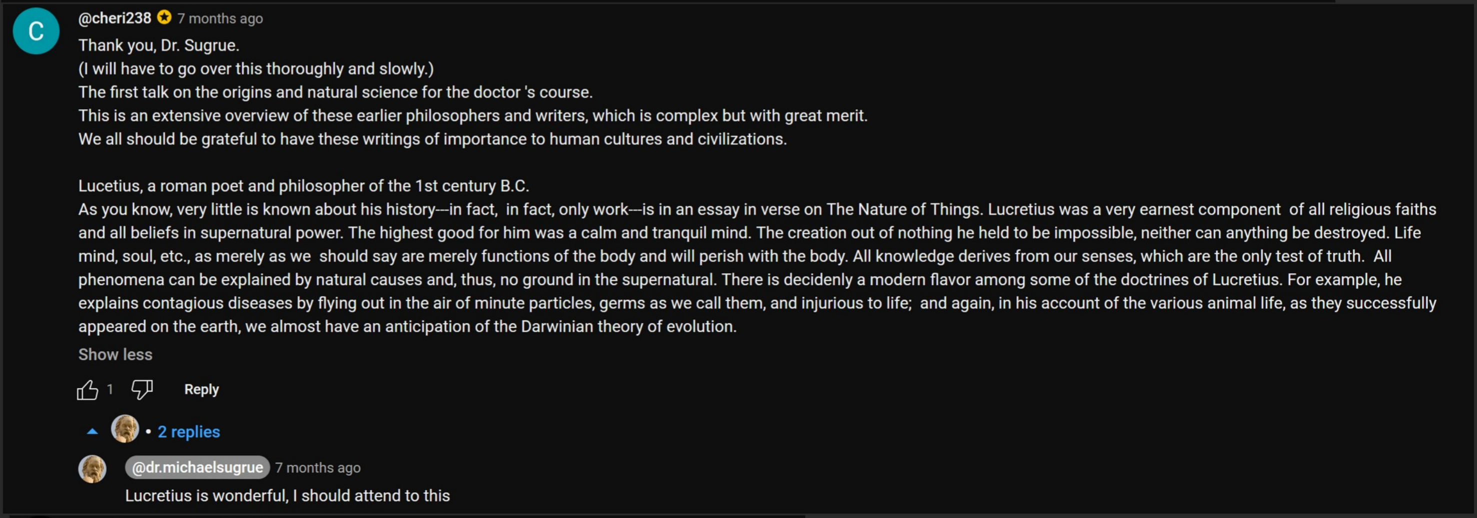
This is true, but you are missing the related point, the categories deployed mean the justification is completely different. Today, a government faced with a tree dangerously overhanging a public road would cut it down, but not regard the tree as a malefactor deserving criminal liability. A dog known to bite will be treated the same, as a public danger, not a culpable moral evildoer. Nobody holds trials for non humans anymore, and if a dog is euthanized because of a proclivity to bite, it gets treated like any other dog being put down, not stoned to death like as a murderer.


@theoneand0nly874 7 months ago

wasn't the origin and reason of scientists and science itself to find a way to live forever, drinking gold and attempting all sorts of stuff before the hypothesis became a thing.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

I think you're talking about alchemy, which is much later and only a small part of natural science.

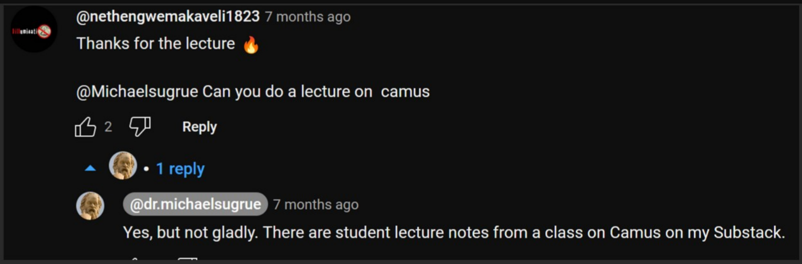

@cheri238 ✪ 7 months ago

Thank you, Dr. Sugrue.
(I will have to go over this thoroughly and slowly.)
The first talk on the origins and natural science for the doctor 's course.
This is an extensive overview of these earlier philosophers and writers, which is complex but with great merit.
We all should be grateful to have these writings of importance to human cultures and civilizations.

Lucetius, a roman poet and philosopher of the 1st century B.C.
As you know, very little is known about his history—in fact, in fact, only work—is in an essay in verse on The Nature of Things. Lucretius was a very earnest component of all religious faiths and all beliefs in supernatural power. The highest good for him was a calm and tranquil mind. The creation out of nothing he held to be impossible, neither can anything be destroyed. Life mind, soul, etc., as merely as we should say are merely functions of the body and will perish with the body. All knowledge derives from our senses, which are the only test of truth. All phenomena can be explained by natural causes and, thus, no ground in the supernatural. There is decidenly a modern flavor among some of the doctrines of Lucretius. For example, he explains contagious diseases by flying out in the air of minute particles, germs as we call them, and injurious to life; and again, in his account of the various animal life, as they successfully appeared on the earth, we almost have an anticipation of the Darwinian theory of evolution.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Lucretius is wonderful, I should attend to this


@nethengwemakaveli1823 7 months ago

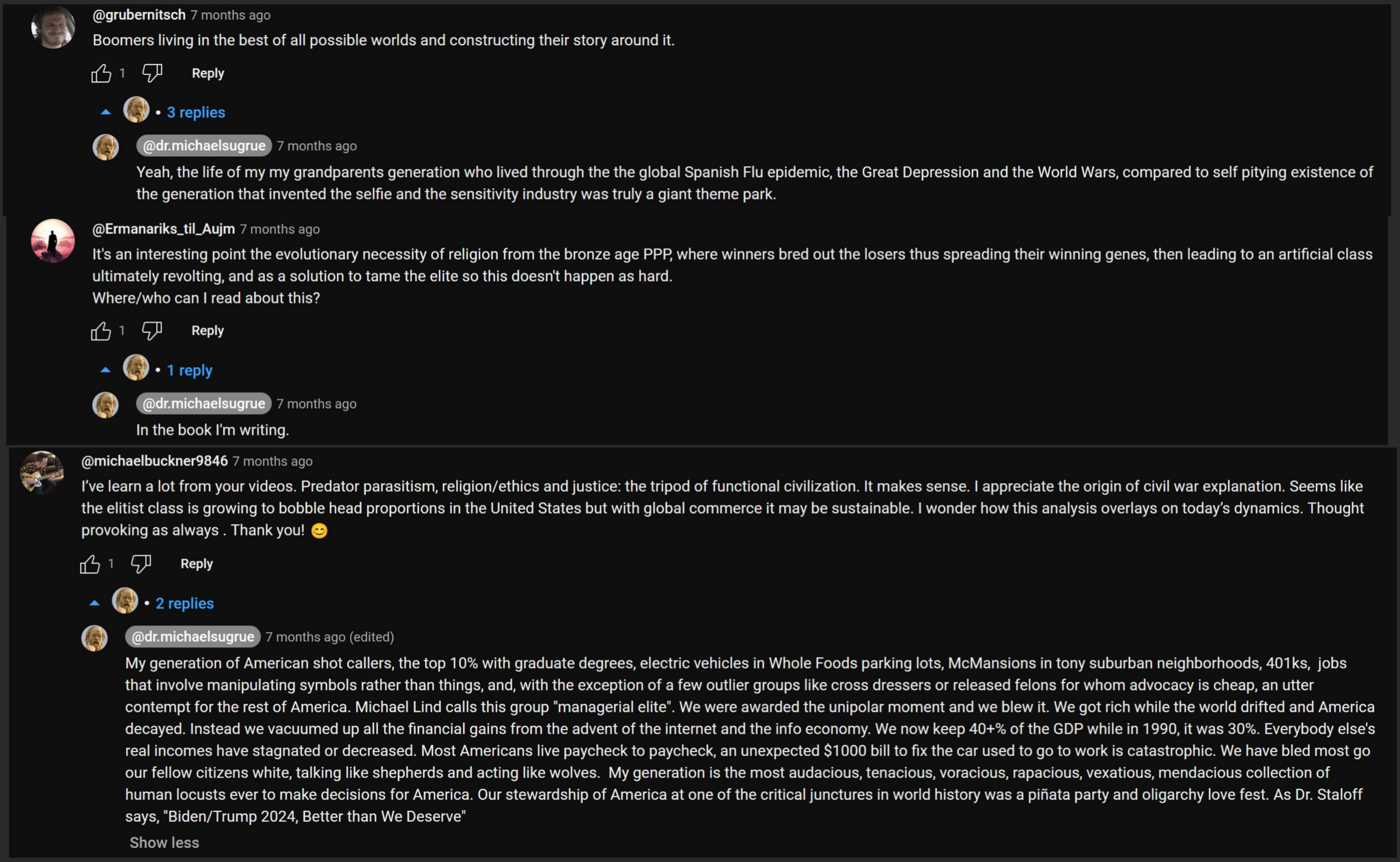
Thanks for the lecture 🔥

@Michaelsugrue Can you do a lecture on camus

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Yes, but not gladly. There are student lecture notes from a class on Camus on my Substack.

World History Open Class. Zoom Discussion at 8 pm EST.



@grubernitsch 7 months ago

Boomers living in the best of all possible worlds and constructing their story around it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

Yeah, the life of my my grandparents generation who lived through the the global Spanish Flu epidemic, the Great Depression and the World Wars, compared to self pitying existence of the generation that invented the selfie and the sensitivity industry was truly a giant theme park.

@Ermanariks_til_Aujm 7 months ago

It's an interesting point the evolutionary necessity of religion from the bronze age PPP, where winners bred out the losers thus spreading their winning genes, then leading to an artificial class ultimately revolting, and as a solution to tame the elite so this doesn't happen as hard.
Where/who can I read about this?

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago

In the book I'm writing.

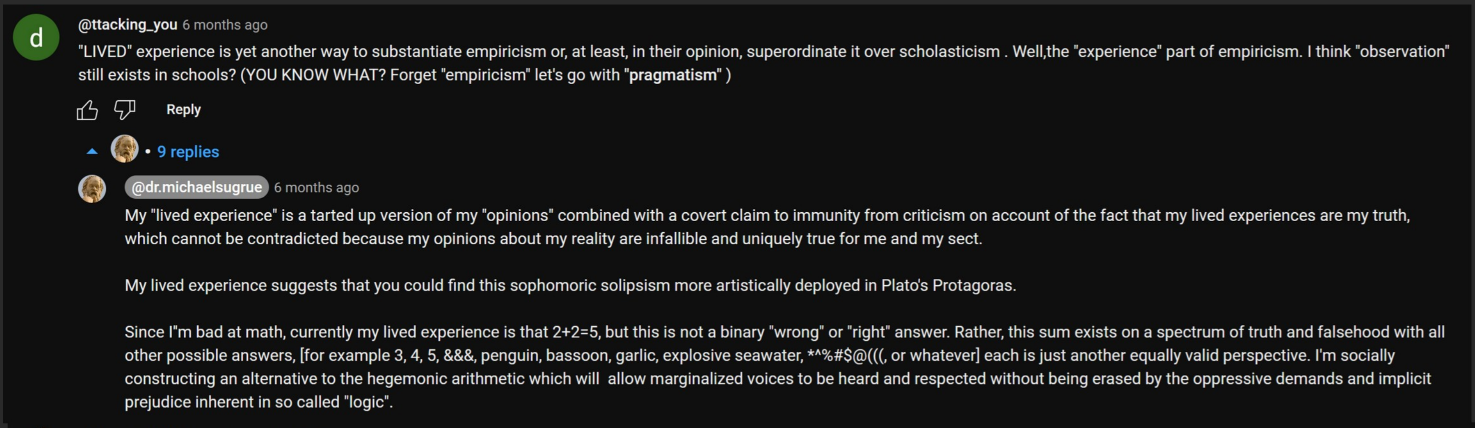
@michaelbuckner9846 7 months ago

I've learn a lot from your videos. Predator parasitism, religion/ethics and justice: the tripod of functional civilization. It makes sense. I appreciate the origin of civil war explanation. Seems like the elitist class is growing to bobble head proportions in the United States but with global commerce it may be sustainable. I wonder how this analysis overlays on today's dynamics. Thought provoking as always . Thank you! 😊

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

My generation of American shot callers, the top 10% with graduate degrees, electric vehicles in Whole Foods parking lots, McMansions in tony suburban neighborhoods, 401ks, jobs that involve manipulating symbols rather than things, and, with the exception of a few outlier groups like cross dressers or released felons for whom advocacy is cheap, an utter contempt for the rest of America. Michael Lind calls this group "managerial elite". We were awarded the unipolar moment and we blew it. We got rich while the world drifted and America decayed. Instead we vacuumed up all the financial gains from the advent of the internet and the info economy. We now keep 40+% of the GDP while in 1990, it was 30%. Everybody else's real incomes have stagnated or decreased. Most Americans live paycheck to paycheck, an unexpected $1000 bill to fix the car used to go to work is catastrophic. We have bled most go our fellow citizens white, talking like shepherds and acting like wolves. My generation is the most audacious, tenacious, voracious, rapacious, vexatious, mendacious collection of human locusts ever to make decisions for America. Our stewardship of America at one of the critical junctures in world history was a piñata party and oligarchy love fest. As Dr. Staloff says, "Biden/Trump 2024, Better than We Deserve"

Mike and Darren Unplugged ep. 10



@ttacking_you 6 months ago

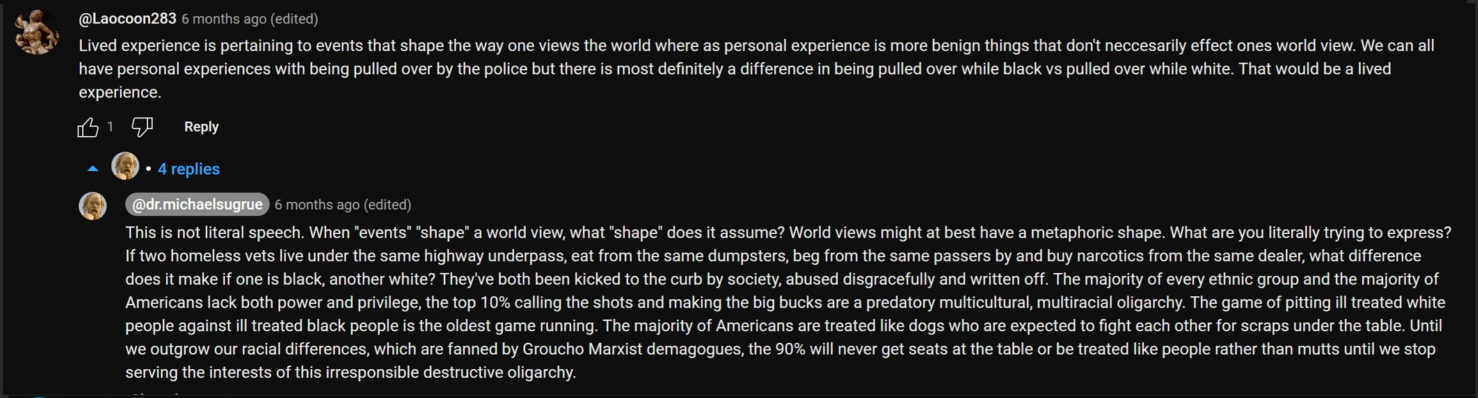
"LIVED" experience is yet another way to substantiate empiricism or, at least, in their opinion, superordinate it over scholasticism . Well,the "experience" part of empiricism. I think "observation" still exists in schools? (YOU KNOW WHAT? Forget "empiricism" let's go with "**pragmatism**")

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

My "lived experience" is a tarted up version of my "opinions" combined with a covert claim to immunity from criticism on account of the fact that my lived experiences are my truth, which cannot be contradicted because my opinions about my reality are infallible and uniquely true for me and my sect.

My lived experience suggests that you could find this sophomoric solipsism more artistically deployed in Plato's Protagoras.

Since I"m bad at math, currently my lived experience is that 2+2=5, but this is not a binary "wrong" or "right" answer. Rather, this sum exists on a spectrum of truth and falsehood with all other possible answers, [for example 3, 4, 5, &&&, penguin, bassoon, garlic, explosive seawater, *^%#$@(((, or whatever] each is just another equally valid perspective. I'm socially constructing an alternative to the hegemonic arithmetic which will allow marginalized voices to be heard and respected without being erased by the oppressive demands and implicit prejudice inherent in so called "logic".

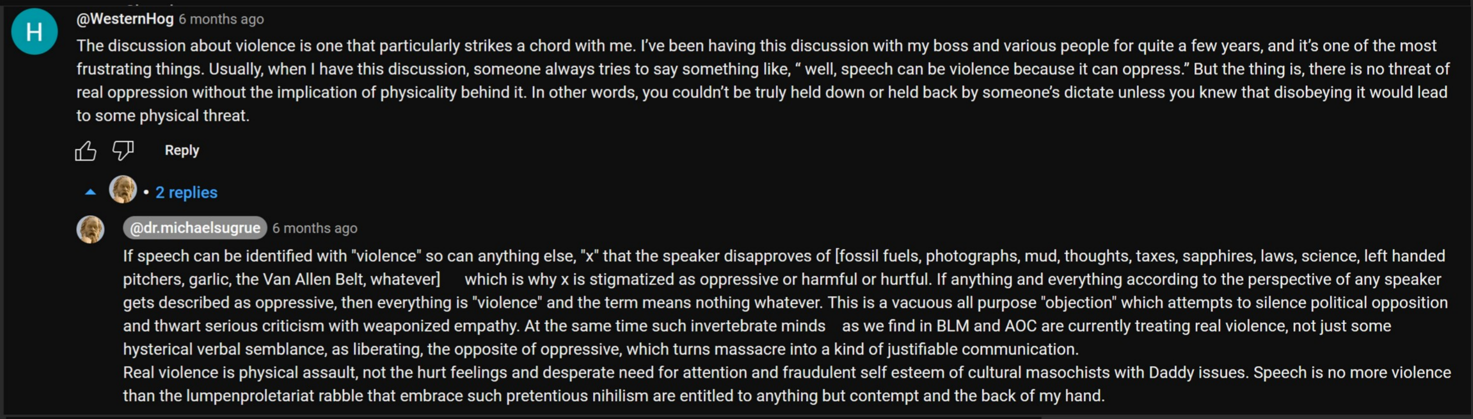


@Laocoon283 6 months ago (edited)

Lived experience is pertaining to events that shape the way one views the world where as personal experience is more benign things that don't neccesarily effect ones world view. We can all have personal experiences with being pulled over by the police but there is most definitely a difference in being pulled over while black vs pulled over while white. That would be a lived experience.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago (edited)

This is not literal speech. When "events" "shape" a world view, what "shape" does it assume? World views might at best have a metaphoric shape. What are you literally trying to express? If two homeless vets live under the same highway underpass, eat from the same dumpsters, beg from the same passers by and buy narcotics from the same dealer, what difference does it make if one is black, another white? They've both been kicked to the curb by society, abused disgracefully and written off. The majority of every ethnic group and the majority of Americans lack both power and privilege, the top 10% calling the shots and making the big bucks are a predatory multicultural, multiracial oligarchy. The game of pitting ill treated white people against ill treated black people is the oldest game running. The majority of Americans are treated like dogs who are expected to fight each other for scraps under the table. Until we outgrow our racial differences, which are fanned by Groucho Marxist demagogues, the 90% will never get seats at the table or be treated like people rather than mutts until we stop serving the interests of this irresponsible destructive oligarchy.

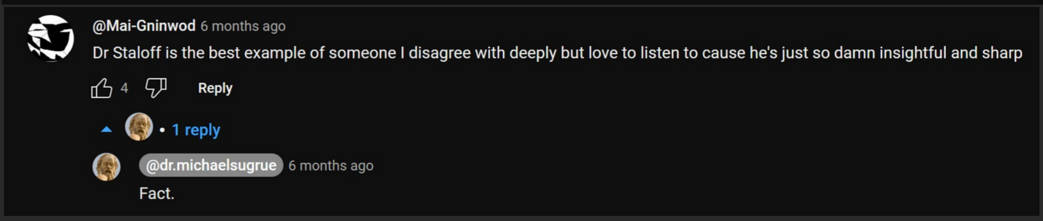


@WesternHog 6 months ago

The discussion about violence is one that particularly strikes a chord with me. I've been having this discussion with my boss and various people for quite a few years, and it's one of the most frustrating things. Usually, when I have this discussion, someone always tries to say something like, " well, speech can be violence because it can oppress." But the thing is, there is no threat of real oppression without the implication of physicality behind it. In other words, you couldn't be truly held down or held back by someone's dictate unless you knew that disobeying it would lead to some physical threat.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

If speech can be identified with "violence" so can anything else, "x" that the speaker disapproves of [fossil fuels, photographs, mud, thoughts, taxes, sapphires, laws, science, left handed pitchers, garlic, the Van Allen Belt, whatever]   which is why x is stigmatized as oppressive or harmful or hurtful. If anything and everything according to the perspective of any speaker gets described as oppressive, then everything is "violence" and the term means nothing whatever. This is a vacuous all purpose "objection" which attempts to silence political opposition and thwart serious criticism with weaponized empathy. At the same time such invertebrate minds   as we find in BLM and AOC are currently treating real violence, not just some hysterical verbal semblance, as liberating, the opposite of oppressive, which turns massacre into a kind of justifiable communication.
Real violence is physical assault, not the hurt feelings and desperate need for attention and fraudulent self esteem of cultural masochists with Daddy issues. Speech is no more violence than the lumpenproletariat rabble that embrace such pretentious nihilism are entitled to anything but contempt and the back of my hand.



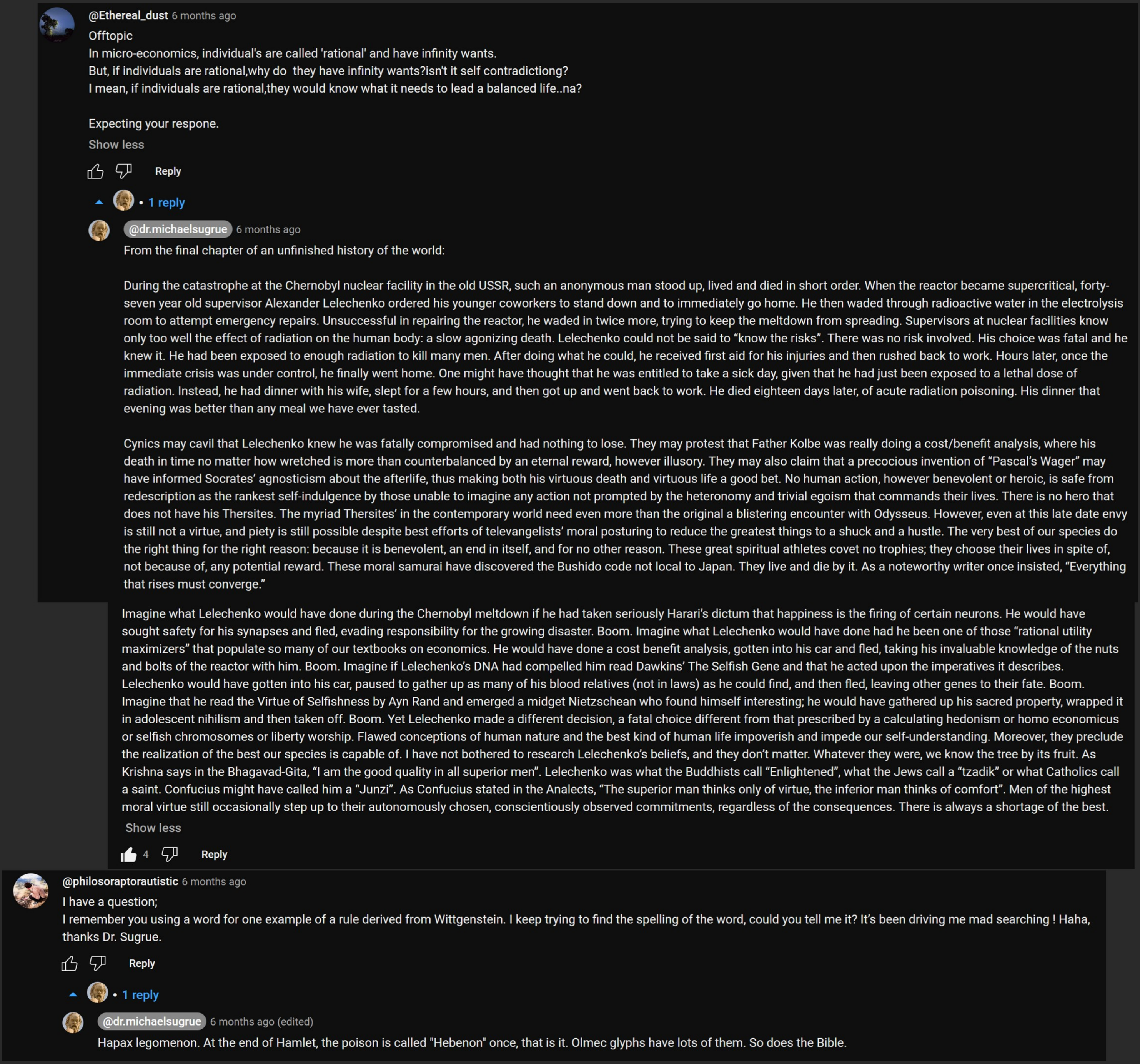
@Mai-Gninwod 6 months ago

Dr Staloff is the best example of someone I disagree with deeply but love to listen to cause he's just so damn insightful and sharp

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Fact.

The Presocratics and Republic 1, October 8 [second meeting]



@Ethereal_dust 6 months ago

Offtopic
In micro-economics, individual's are called 'rational' and have infinity wants.
But, if individuals are rational,why do they have infinity wants?isn't it self contradictong?
I mean, if individuals are rational,they would know what it needs to lead a balanced life..na?

Expecting your respone.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

From the final chapter of an unfinished history of the world:

During the catastrophe at the Chernobyl nuclear facility in the old USSR, such an anonymous man stood up, lived and died in short order. When the reactor became supercritical, forty-seven year old supervisor Alexander Lelechenko ordered his younger coworkers to stand down and to immediately go home. He then waded through radioactive water in the electrolysis room to attempt emergency repairs. Unsuccessful in repairing the reactor, he waded in twice more, trying to keep the meltdown from spreading. Supervisors at nuclear facilities know only too well the effect of radiation on the human body: a slow agonizing death. Lelechenko could not be said to “know the risks”. There was no risk involved. His choice was fatal and he knew it. He had been exposed to enough radiation to kill many men. After doing what he could, he received first aid for his injuries and then rushed back to work. Hours later, once the immediate crisis was under control, he finally went home. One might have thought that he was entitled to take a sick day, given that he had just been exposed to a lethal dose of radiation. Instead, he had dinner with his wife, slept for a few hours, and then got up and went back to work. He died eighteen days later, of acute radiation poisoning. His dinner that evening was better than any meal we have ever tasted.

Cynics may cavil that Lelechenko knew he was fatally compromised and had nothing to lose. They may protest that Father Kolbe was really doing a cost/benefit analysis, where his death in time no matter how wretched is more than counterbalanced by an eternal reward, however illusory. They may also claim that a precocious invention of “Pascal’s Wager” may have informed Socrates’ agnosticism about the afterlife, thus making both his virtuous death and virtuous life a good bet. No human action, however benevolent or heroic, is safe from redescription as the rankest self-indulgence by those unable to imagine any action not prompted by the heteronomy and trivial egoism that commands their lives. There is no hero that does not have his Thersites. The myriad Thersites’ in the contemporary world need even more than the original a blistering encounter with Odysseus. However, even at this late date envy is still not a virtue, and piety is still possible despite best efforts of televangelists’ moral posturing to reduce the greatest things to a shuck and a hustle. The very best of our species do the right thing for the right reason: because it is benevolent, an end in itself, and for no other reason. These great spiritual athletes covet no trophies; they choose their lives in spite of, not because of, any potential reward. These moral samurai have discovered the Bushido code not local to Japan. They live and die by it. As a noteworthy writer once insisted, “Everything that rises must converge.”

Imagine what Lelechenko would have done during the Chernobyl meltdown if he had taken seriously Harari’s dictum that happiness is the firing of certain neurons. He would have sought safety for his synapses and fled, evading responsibility for the growing disaster. Boom. Imagine what Lelechenko would have done had he been one of those “rational utility maximizers” that populate so many of our textbooks on economics. He would have done a cost benefit analysis, gotten into his car and fled, taking his invaluable knowledge of the nuts and bolts of the reactor with him. Boom. Imagine if Lelechenko’s DNA had compelled him read Dawkins’ The Selfish Gene and that he acted upon the imperatives it describes. Lelechenko would have gotten into his car, paused to gather up as many of his blood relatives (not in laws) as he could find, and then fled, leaving other genes to their fate. Boom. Imagine that he read the Virtue of Selfishness by Ayn Rand and emerged a midget Nietzschean who found himself interesting; he would have gathered up his sacred property, wrapped it in adolescent nihilism and then taken off. Boom. Yet Lelechenko made a different decision, a fatal choice different from that prescribed by a calculating hedonism or homo economicus or selfish chromosomes or liberty worship. Flawed conceptions of human nature and the best kind of human life impoverish and impede our self-understanding. Moreover, they preclude the realization of the best our species is capable of. I have not bothered to research Lelechenko’s beliefs, and they don’t matter. Whatever they were, we know the tree by its fruit. As Krishna says in the Bhagavad-Gita, “I am the good quality in all superior men”. Lelechenko was what the Buddhists call “Enlightened”, what the Jews call a “tzadik” or what Catholics call a saint. Confucius might have called him a “Junzi”. As Confucius stated in the Analects, “The superior man thinks only of virtue, the inferior man thinks of comfort”. Men of the highest moral virtue still occasionally step up to their autonomously chosen, conscientiously observed commitments, regardless of the consequences. There is always a shortage of the best.

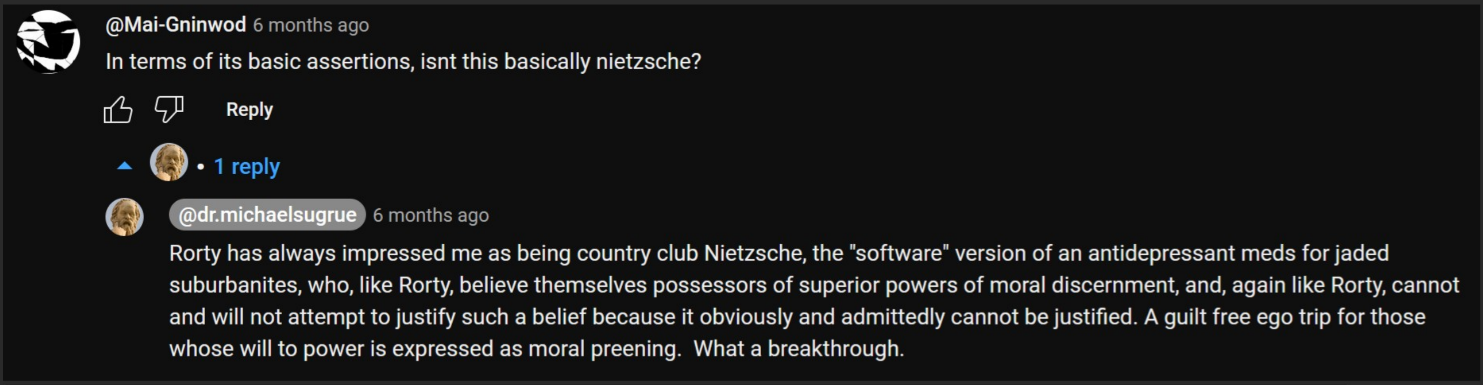
@philosoraptorautistic 6 months ago

I have a question;
I remember you using a word for one example of a rule derived from Wittgenstein. I keep trying to find the spelling of the word, could you tell me it? It’s been driving me mad searching ! Haha, thanks Dr. Sugrue.

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago (edited)

Hapax legomenon. At the end of Hamlet, the poison is called "Hebenon" once, that is it. Olmec glyphs have lots of them. So does the Bible.

Dr. Darren Staloff, Rorty's Neo Pragmatism_

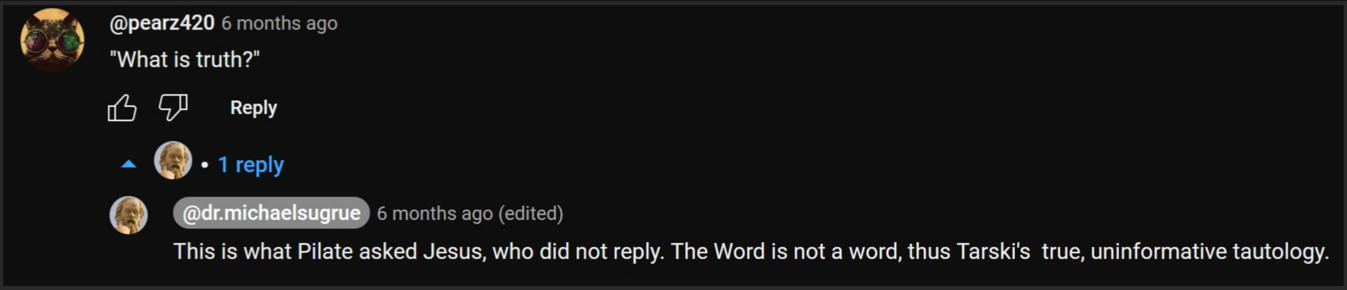


@Mai-Gninwod 6 months ago

In terms of its basic assertions, isnt this basically nietzsche?

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago

Rorty has always impressed me as being country club Nietzsche, the "software" version of an antidepressant meds for jaded suburbanites, who, like Rorty, believe themselves possessors of superior powers of moral discernment, and, again like Rorty, cannot and will not attempt to justify such a belief because it obviously and admittedly cannot be justified. A guilt free ego trip for those whose will to power is expressed as moral preening. What a breakthrough.



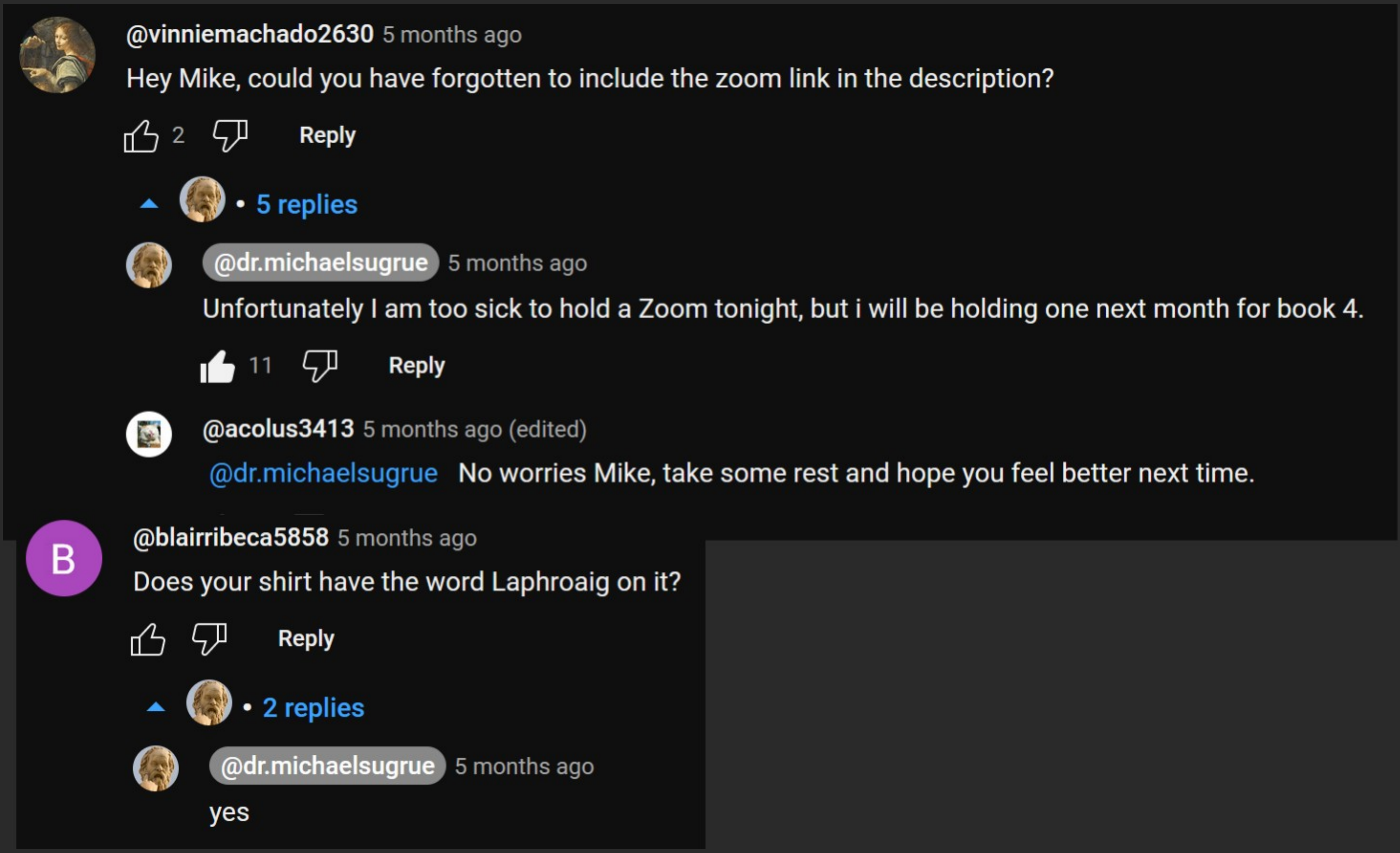
@pearz420 6 months ago

"What is truth?"

@dr.michaelsugrue 6 months ago (edited)

This is what Pilate asked Jesus, who did not reply. The Word is not a word, thus Tarski's true, uninformative tautology.

Republic 3



@vinniemachado2630 5 months ago

Hey Mike, could you have forgotten to include the zoom link in the description?

@dr.michaelsugrue 5 months ago

Unfortunately I am too sick to hold a Zoom tonight, but i will be holding one next month for book 4.

@acolus3413 5 months ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue No worries Mike, take some rest and hope you feel better next time.

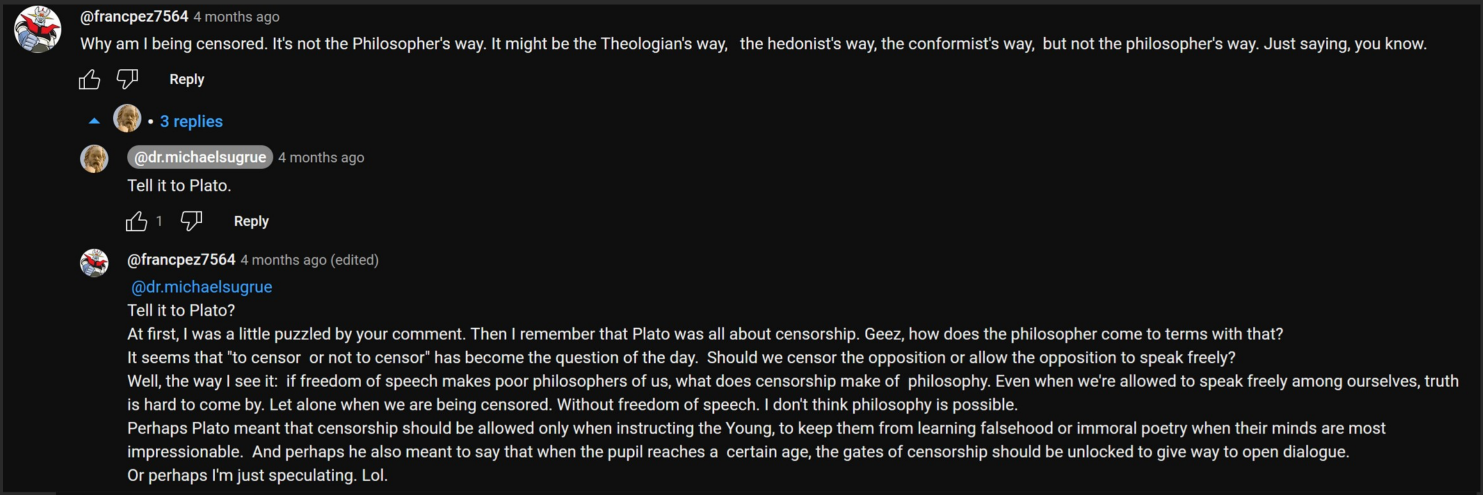
@blairribeca5858 5 months ago

Does your shirt have the word Laphroaig on it?

@dr.michaelsugrue 5 months ago

yes

Nature 1.0 to Nature 2.0



@francpez7564 4 months ago

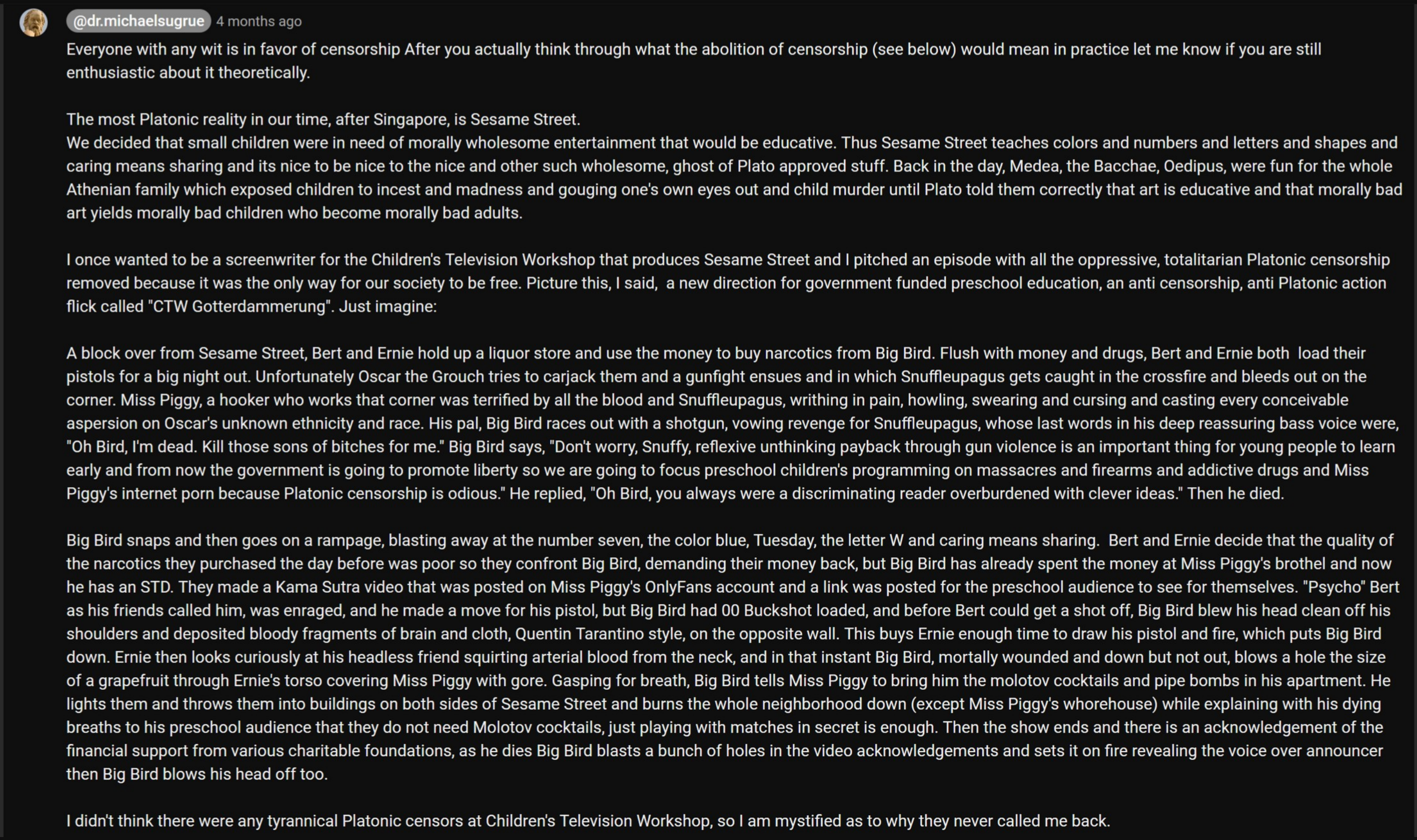
Why am I being censored. It's not the Philosopher's way. It might be the Theologian's way, the hedonist's way, the conformist's way, but not the philosopher's way. Just saying, you know.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Tell it to Plato.

@francpez7564 4 months ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue
Tell it to Plato?
At first, I was a little puzzled by your comment. Then I remember that Plato was all about censorship. Geez, how does the philosopher come to terms with that?
It seems that "to censor or not to censor" has become the question of the day. Should we censor the opposition or allow the opposition to speak freely?
Well, the way I see it: if freedom of speech makes poor philosophers of us, what does censorship make of philosophy. Even when we're allowed to speak freely among ourselves, truth is hard to come by. Let alone when we are being censored. Without freedom of speech. I don't think philosophy is possible.
Perhaps Plato meant that censorship should be allowed only when instructing the Young, to keep them from learning falsehood or immoral poetry when their minds are most impressionable. And perhaps he also meant to say that when the pupil reaches a certain age, the gates of censorship should be unlocked to give way to open dialogue.
Or perhaps I'm just speculating. Lol.



@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Everyone with any wit is in favor of censorship After you actually think through what the abolition of censorship (see below) would mean in practice let me know if you are still enthusiastic about it theoretically.

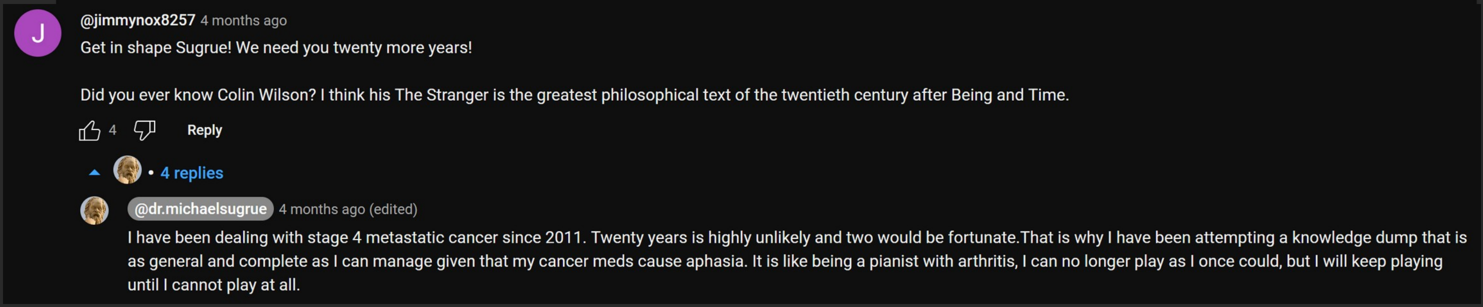
The most Platonic reality in our time, after Singapore, is Sesame Street.
We decided that small children were in need of morally wholesome entertainment that would be educative. Thus Sesame Street teaches colors and numbers and letters and shapes and caring means sharing and its nice to be nice to the nice and other such wholesome, ghost of Plato approved stuff. Back in the day, Medea, the Bacchae, Oedipus, were fun for the whole Athenian family which exposed children to incest and madness and gouging one's own eyes out and child murder until Plato told them correctly that art is educative and that morally bad art yields morally bad children who become morally bad adults.

I once wanted to be a screenwriter for the Children's Television Workshop that produces Sesame Street and I pitched an episode with all the oppressive, totalitarian Platonic censorship removed because it was the only way for our society to be free. Picture this, I said, a new direction for government funded preschool education, an anti censorship, anti Platonic action flick called "CTW Gotterdammerung". Just imagine:

A block over from Sesame Street, Bert and Ernie hold up a liquor store and use the money to buy narcotics from Big Bird. Flush with money and drugs, Bert and Ernie both load their pistols for a big night out. Unfortunately Oscar the Grouch tries to carjack them and a gunfight ensues and in which Snuffleupagus gets caught in the crossfire and bleeds out on the corner. Miss Piggy, a hooker who works that corner was terrified by all the blood and Snuffleupagus, writhing in pain, howling, swearing and cursing and casting every conceivable aspersion on Oscar's unknown ethnicity and race. His pal, Big Bird races out with a shotgun, vowing revenge for Snuffleupagus, whose last words in his deep reassuring bass voice were, "Oh Bird, I'm dead. Kill those sons of bitches for me." Big Bird says, "Don't worry, Snuffy, reflexive unthinking payback through gun violence is an important thing for young people to learn early and from now the government is going to promote liberty so we are going to focus preschool children's programming on massacres and firearms and addictive drugs and Miss Piggy's internet porn because Platonic censorship is odious." He replied, "Oh Bird, you always were a discriminating reader overburdened with clever ideas." Then he died.

Big Bird snaps and then goes on a rampage, blasting away at the number seven, the color blue, Tuesday, the letter W and caring means sharing. Bert and Ernie decide that the quality of the narcotics they purchased the day before was poor so they confront Big Bird, demanding their money back, but Big Bird has already spent the money at Miss Piggy's brothel and now he has an STD. They made a Kama Sutra video that was posted on Miss Piggy's OnlyFans account and a link was posted for the preschool audience to see for themselves. "Psycho" Bert as his friends called him, was enraged, and he made a move for his pistol, but Big Bird had 00 Buckshot loaded, and before Bert could get a shot off, Big Bird blew his head clean off his shoulders and deposited bloody fragments of brain and cloth, Quentin Tarantino style, on the opposite wall. This buys Ernie enough time to draw his pistol and fire, which puts Big Bird down. Ernie then looks curiously at his headless friend squirting arterial blood from the neck, and in that instant Big Bird, mortally wounded and down but not out, blows a hole the size of a grapefruit through Ernie's torso covering Miss Piggy with gore. Gasping for breath, Big Bird tells Miss Piggy to bring him the molotov cocktails and pipe bombs in his apartment. He lights them and throws them into buildings on both sides of Sesame Street and burns the whole neighborhood down (except Miss Piggy's whorehouse) while explaining with his dying breaths to his preschool audience that they do not need Molotov cocktails, just playing with matches in secret is enough. Then the show ends and there is an acknowledgement of the financial support from various charitable foundations, as he dies Big Bird blasts a bunch of holes in the video acknowledgements and sets it on fire revealing the voice over announcer then Big Bird blows his head off too.

I didn't think there were any tyrannical Platonic censors at Children's Television Workshop, so I am mystified as to why they never called me back.



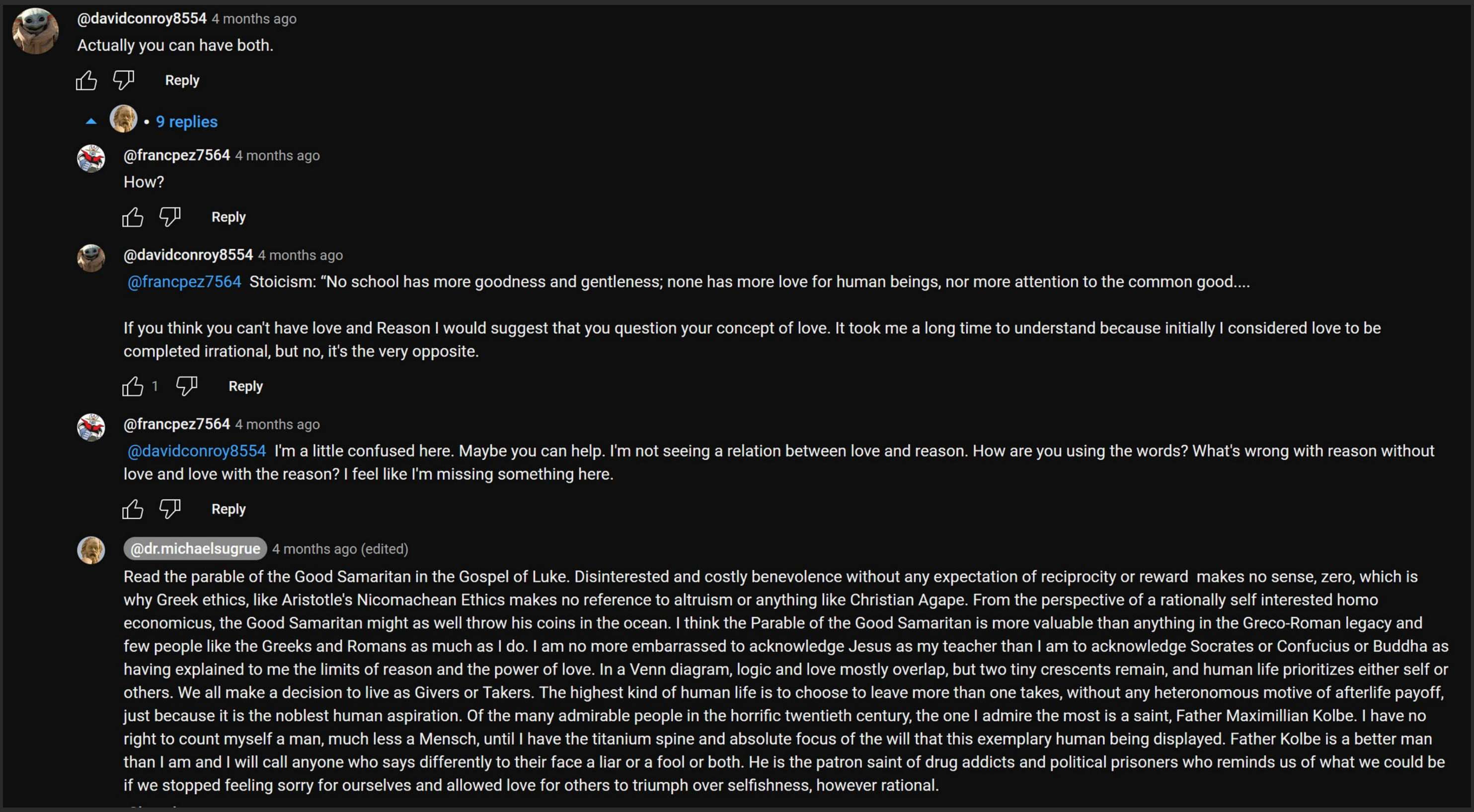
@jimmynox8257 4 months ago

Get in shape Sugrue! We need you twenty more years!

Did you ever know Colin Wilson? I think his The Stranger is the greatest philosophical text of the twentieth century after Being and Time.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

I have been dealing with stage 4 metastatic cancer since 2011. Twenty years is highly unlikely and two would be fortunate.That is why I have been attempting a knowledge dump that is as general and complete as I can manage given that my cancer meds cause aphasia. It is like being a pianist with arthritis, I can no longer play as I once could, but I will keep playing until I cannot play at all.



@davidconroy8554 4 months ago

Actually you can have both.

@francpez7564 4 months ago

How?

@davidconroy8554 4 months ago

@francpez7564 Stoicism: "No school has more goodness and gentleness; none has more love for human beings, nor more attention to the common good....

If you think you can't have love and Reason I would suggest that you question your concept of love. It took me a long time to understand because initially I considered love to be completed irrational, but no, it's the very opposite.

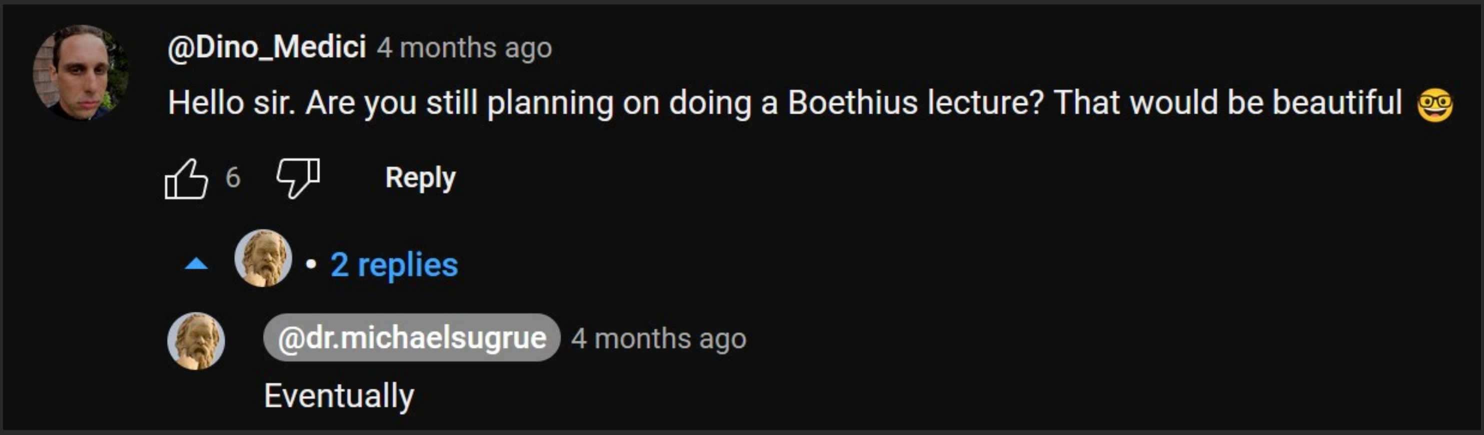
@francpez7564 4 months ago

@davidconroy8554 I'm a little confused here. Maybe you can help. I'm not seeing a relation between love and reason. How are you using the words? What's wrong with reason without love and love with the reason? I feel like I'm missing something here.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

Read the parable of the Good Samaritan in the Gospel of Luke. Disinterested and costly benevolence without any expectation of reciprocity or reward makes no sense, zero, which is why Greek ethics, like Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics makes no reference to altruism or anything like Christian Agape. From the perspective of a rationally self interested homo economicus, the Good Samaritan might as well throw his coins in the ocean. I think the Parable of the Good Samaritan is more valuable than anything in the Greco-Roman legacy and few people like the Greeks and Romans as much as I do. I am no more embarrassed to acknowledge Jesus as my teacher than I am to acknowledge Socrates or Confucius or Buddha as having explained to me the limits of reason and the power of love. In a Venn diagram, logic and love mostly overlap, but two tiny crescents remain, and human life prioritizes either self or others. We all make a decision to live as Givers or Takers. The highest kind of human life is to choose to leave more than one takes, without any heteronomous motive of afterlife payoff, just because it is the noblest human aspiration. Of the many admirable people in the horrific twentieth century, the one I admire the most is a saint, Father Maximillian Kolbe. I have no right to count myself a man, much less a Mensch, until I have the titanium spine and absolute focus of the will that this exemplary human being displayed. Father Kolbe is a better man than I am and I will call anyone who says differently to their face a liar or a fool or both. He is the patron saint of drug addicts and political prisoners who reminds us of what we could be if we stopped feeling sorry for ourselves and allowed love for others to triumph over selfishness, however rational.

Hippocratic Musings



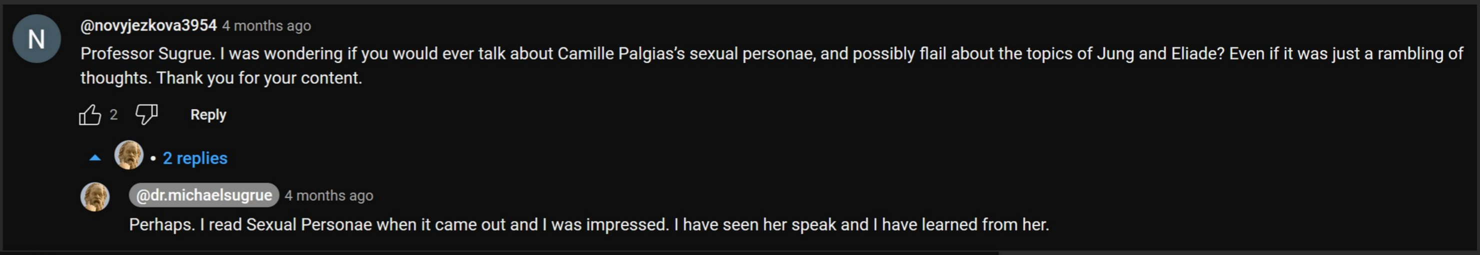
@Dino_Medici 4 months ago

Hello sir. Are you still planning on doing a Boethius lecture? That would be beautiful 🤓

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Eventually

Republic 4

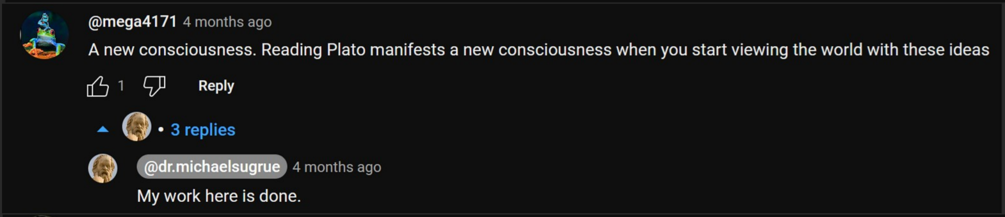


@novyjezkova3954 4 months ago

Professor Sugrue. I was wondering if you would ever talk about Camille Palgias's sexual personae, and possibly flail about the topics of Jung and Eliade? Even if it was just a rambling of thoughts. Thank you for your content.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Perhaps. I read Sexual Personae when it came out and I was impressed. I have seen her speak and I have learned from her.

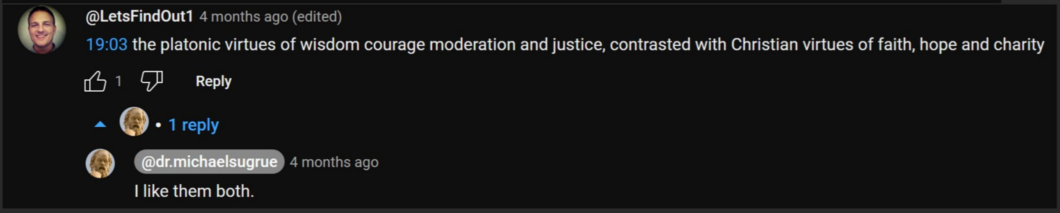


@mega4171 4 months ago

A new consciousness. Reading Plato manifests a new consciousness when you start viewing the world with these ideas

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

My work here is done.



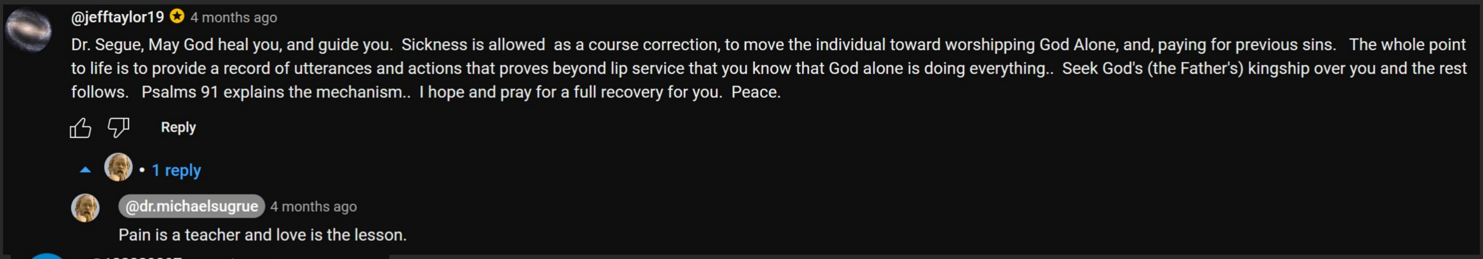
@LetsFindOut1 4 months ago (edited)

19:03 the platonic virtues of wisdom courage moderation and justice, contrasted with Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

I like them both.

Physics and the Structure of History

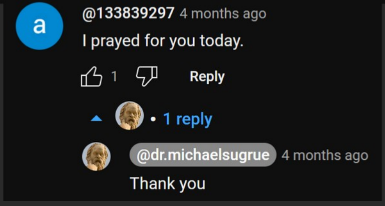


@jefftaylor19 4 months ago

Dr. Segue, May God heal you, and guide you. Sickness is allowed as a course correction, to move the individual toward worshipping God Alone, and, paying for previous sins. The whole point to life is to provide a record of utterances and actions that proves beyond lip service that you know that God alone is doing everything.. Seek God's (the Father's) kingship over you and the rest follows. Psalms 91 explains the mechanism.. I hope and pray for a full recovery for you. Peace.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Pain is a teacher and love is the lesson.



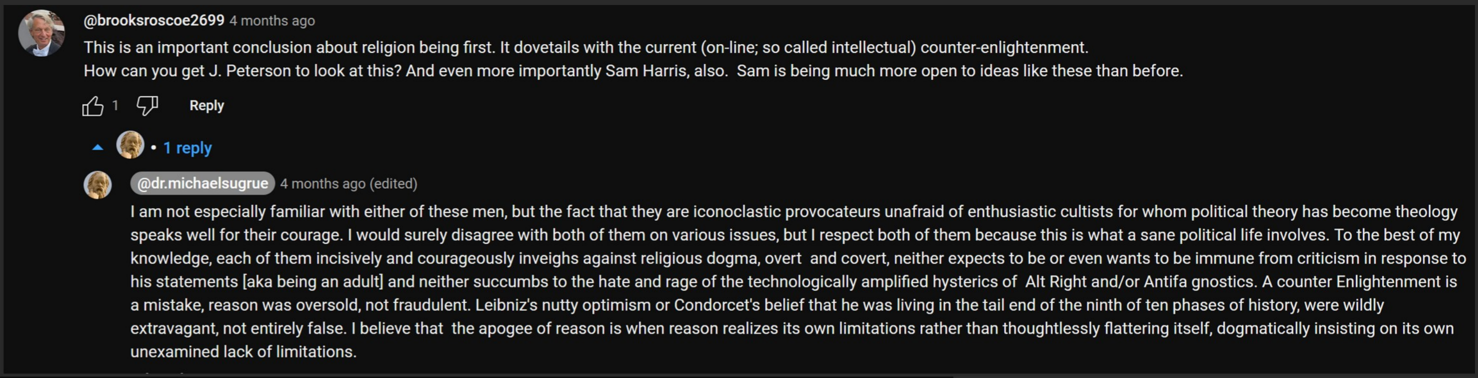
@133839297 4 months ago

I prayed for you today.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Thank you

World History

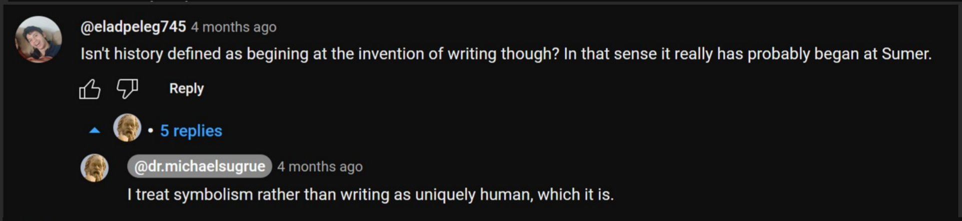


@brooksroscoe2699 4 months ago

This is an important conclusion about religion being first. It dovetails with the current (on-line; so called intellectual) counter-enlightenment.
How can you get J. Peterson to look at this? And even more importantly Sam Harris, also. Sam is being much more open to ideas like these than before.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

I am not especially familiar with either of these men, but the fact that they are iconoclastic provocateurs unafraid of enthusiastic cultists for whom political theory has become theology speaks well for their courage. I would surely disagree with both of them on various issues, but I respect both of them because this is what a sane political life involves. To the best of my knowledge, each of them incisively and courageously inveighs against religious dogma, overt and covert, neither expects to be or even wants to be immune from criticism in response to his statements [aka being an adult] and neither succumbs to the hate and rage of the technologically amplified hysterics of Alt Right and/or Antifa gnostics. A counter Enlightenment is a mistake, reason was oversold, not fraudulent. Leibniz's nutty optimism or Condorcet's belief that he was living in the tail end of the ninth of ten phases of history, were wildly extravagant, not entirely false. I believe that the apogee of reason is when reason realizes its own limitations rather than thoughtlessly flattering itself, dogmatically insisting on its own unexamined lack of limitations.

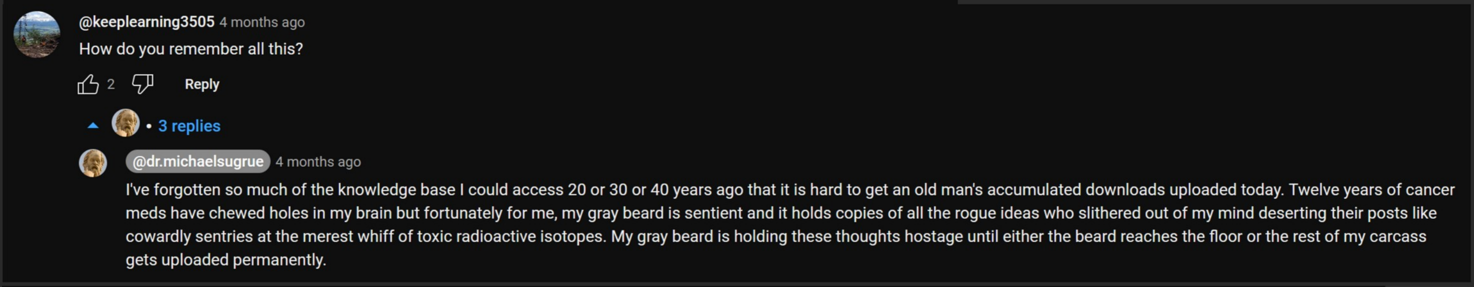


@eladpeleg745 4 months ago

Isn't history defined as begining at the invention of writing though? In that sense it really has probably began at Sumer.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

I treat symbolism rather than writing as uniquely human, which it is.

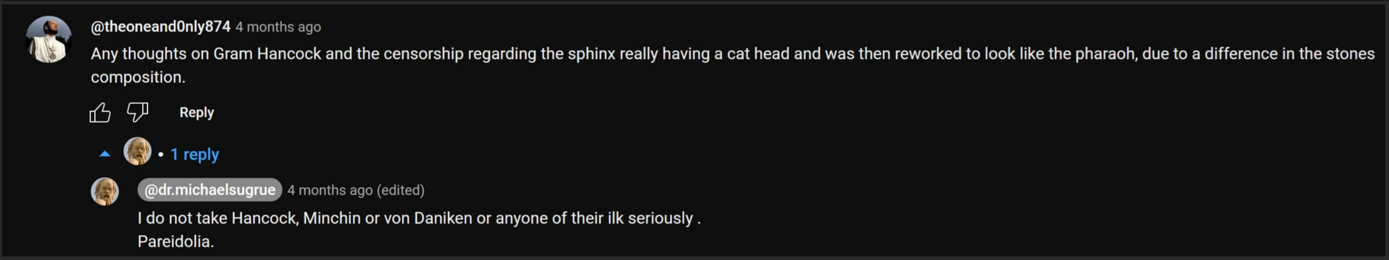


@keeplearning3505 4 months ago

How do you remember all this?

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

I've forgotten so much of the knowledge base I could access 20 or 30 or 40 years ago that it is hard to get an old man's accumulated downloads uploaded today. Twelve years of cancer meds have chewed holes in my brain but fortunately for me, my gray beard is sentient and it holds copies of all the rogue ideas who slithered out of my mind deserting their posts like cowardly sentries at the merest whiff of toxic radioactive isotopes. My gray beard is holding these thoughts hostage until either the beard reaches the floor or the rest of my carcass gets uploaded permanently.

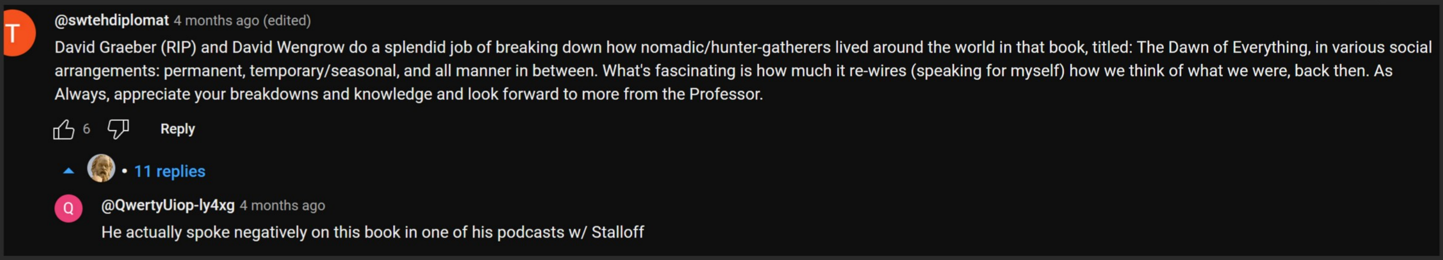


@theoneand0nly874 4 months ago

Any thoughts on Gram Hancock and the censorship regarding the sphinx really having a cat head and was then reworked to look like the pharaoh, due to a difference in the stones composition.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

I do not take Hancock, Minchin or von Daniken or anyone of their ilk seriously .
Pareidolia.

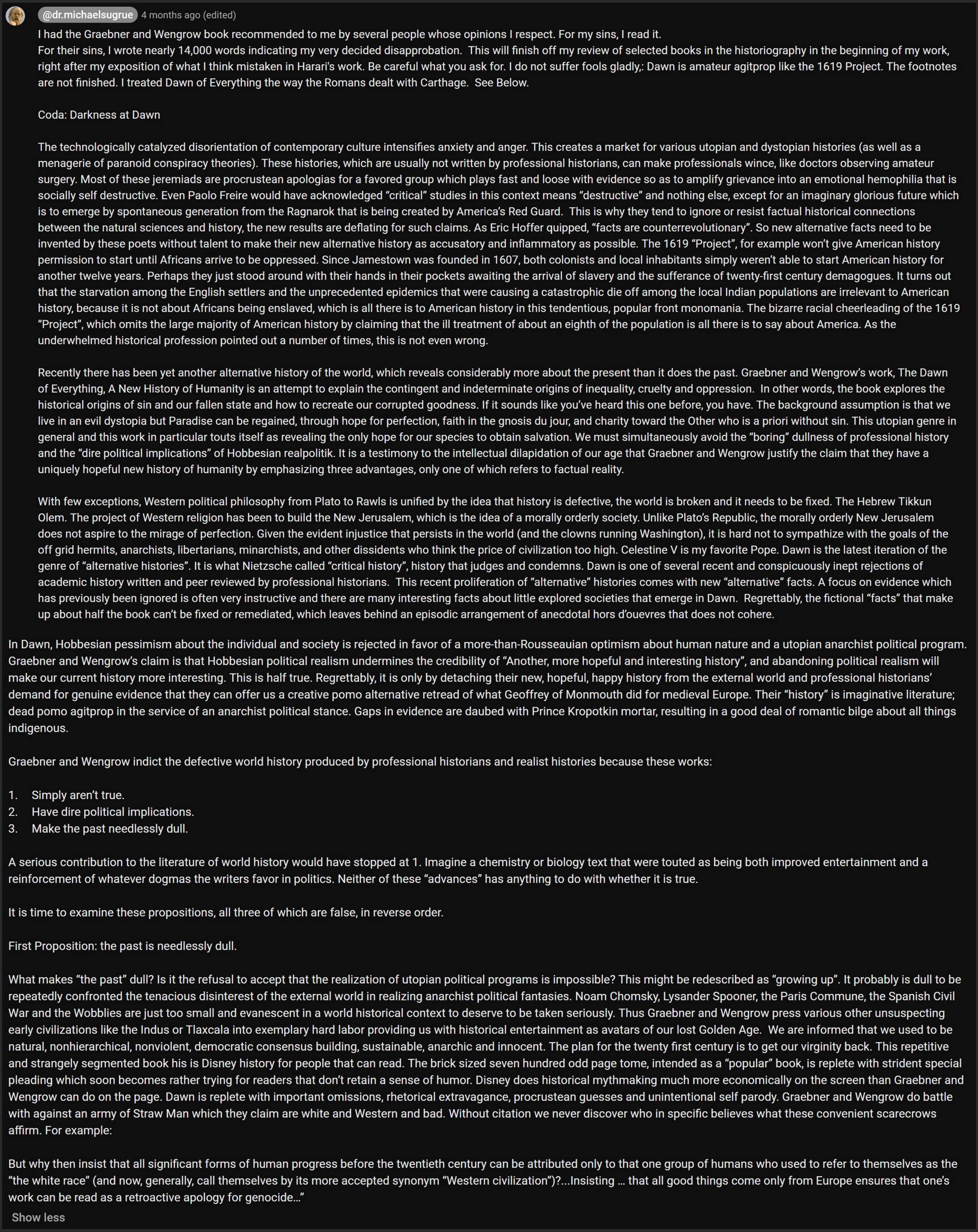


@swtehdiplomat 4 months ago (edited)

David Graeber (RIP) and David Wengrow do a splendid job of breaking down how nomadic/hunter-gatherers lived around the world in that book, titled: The Dawn of Everything, in various social arrangements: permanent, temporary/seasonal, and all manner in between. What's fascinating is how much it re-wires (speaking for myself) how we think of what we were, back then. As Always, appreciate your breakdowns and knowledge and look forward to more from the Professor.

@QwertyUiop-ly4xg 4 months ago

He actually spoke negatively on this book in one of his podcasts w/ Stalloff



@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

I had the Graebner and Wengrow book recommended to me by several people whose opinions I respect. For my sins, I read it.
For their sins, I wrote nearly 14,000 words indicating my very decided disapprobation. This will finish off my review of selected books in the historiography in the beginning of my work, right after my exposition of what I think mistaken in Harari's work. Be careful what you ask for. I do not suffer fools gladly,: Dawn is amateur agitprop like the 1619 Project. The footnotes are not finished. I treated Dawn of Everything the way the Romans dealt with Carthage. See Below.

Coda: Darkness at Dawn

The technologically catalyzed disorientation of contemporary culture intensifies anxiety and anger. This creates a market for various utopian and dystopian histories (as well as a menagerie of paranoid conspiracy theories). These histories, which are usually not written by professional historians, can make professionals wince, like doctors observing amateur surgery. Most of these jeremiads are procrustean apologias for a favored group which plays fast and loose with evidence so as to amplify grievance into an emotional hemophilia that is socially self destructive. Even Paolo Freire would have acknowledged "critical" studies in this context means "destructive" and nothing else, except for an imaginary glorious future which is to emerge by spontaneous generation from the Ragnarok that is being created by America's Red Guard. This is why they tend to ignore or resist factual historical connections between the natural sciences and history, the new results are deflating for such claims. As Eric Hoffer quipped, "facts are counterrevolutionary". So new alternative facts need to be invented by these poets without talent to make their new alternative history as accusatory and inflammatory as possible. The 1619 "Project", for example won't give American history permission to start until Africans arrive to be oppressed. Since Jamestown was founded in 1607, both colonists and local inhabitants simply weren't able to start American history for another twelve years. Perhaps they just stood around with their hands in their pockets awaiting the arrival of slavery and the sufferance of twenty-first century demagogues. It turns out that the starvation among the English settlers and the unprecedented epidemics that were causing a catastrophic die off among the local Indian populations are irrelevant to American history, because it is not about Africans being enslaved, which is all there is to American history in this tendentious, popular front monomania. The bizarre racial cheerleading of the 1619 "Project", which omits the large majority of American history by claiming that the ill treatment of about an eighth of the population is all there is to say about America. As the underwhelmed historical profession pointed out a number of times, this is not even wrong.

Recently there has been yet another alternative history of the world, which reveals considerably more about the present than it does the past. Graebner and Wengrow's work, The Dawn of Everything, A New History of Humanity is an attempt to explain the contingent and indeterminate origins of inequality, cruelty and oppression. In other words, the book explores the historical origins of sin and our fallen state and how to recreate our corrupted goodness. If it sounds like you've heard this one before, you have. The background assumption is that we live in an evil dystopia but Paradise can be regained, through hope for perfection, faith in the gnosis du jour, and charity toward the Other who is a priori without sin. This utopian genre in general and this work in particular touts itself as revealing the only hope for our species to obtain salvation. We must simultaneously avoid the "boring" dullness of professional history and the "dire political implications" of Hobbesian realpolitik. It is a testimony to the intellectual dilapidation of our age that Graebner and Wengrow justify the claim that they have a uniquely hopeful new history of humanity by emphasizing three advantages, only one of which refers to factual reality.

With few exceptions, Western political philosophy from Plato to Rawls is unified by the idea that history is defective, the world is broken and it needs to be fixed. The Hebrew Tikkun Olem. The project of Western religion has been to build the New Jerusalem, which is the idea of a morally orderly society. Unlike Plato's Republic, the morally orderly New Jerusalem does not aspire to the mirage of perfection. Given the evident injustice that persists in the world (and the clowns running Washington), it is hard not to sympathize with the goals of the off grid hermits, anarchists, libertarians, minarchists, and other dissidents who think the price of civilization too high. Celestine V is my favorite Pope. Dawn is the latest iteration of the genre of "alternative histories". It is what Nietzsche called "critical history", history that judges and condemns. Dawn is one of several recent and conspicuously inept rejections of academic history written and peer reviewed by professional historians. This recent proliferation of "alternative" histories comes with new "alternative" facts. A focus on evidence which has previously been ignored is often very instructive and there are many interesting facts about little explored societies that emerge in Dawn. Regrettably, the fictional "facts" that make up about half the book can't be fixed or remediated, which leaves behind an episodic arrangement of anecdotal hors d'ouevres that does not cohere.

In Dawn, Hobbesian pessimism about the individual and society is rejected in favor of a more-than-Rousseauian optimism about human nature and a utopian anarchist political program. Graebner and Wengrow's claim is that Hobbesian political realism undermines the credibility of "Another, more hopeful and interesting history", and abandoning political realism will make our current history more interesting. This is half true. Regrettably, it is only by detaching their new, hopeful, happy history from the external world and professional historians' demand for genuine evidence that they can offer us a creative pomo alternative retread of what Geoffrey of Monmouth did for medieval Europe. Their "history" is imaginative literature; dead pomo agitprop in the service of an anarchist political stance. Gaps in evidence are daubed with Prince Kropotkin mortar, resulting in a good deal of romantic bilge about all things indigenous.

Graebner and Wengrow indict the defective world history produced by professional historians and realist histories because these works:

1. Simply aren't true.
2. Have dire political implications.
3. Make the past needlessly dull.

A serious contribution to the literature of world history would have stopped at 1. Imagine a chemistry or biology text that were touted as being both improved entertainment and a reinforcement of whatever dogmas the writers favor in politics. Neither of these "advances" has anything to do with whether it is true.

It is time to examine these propositions, all three of which are false, in reverse order.

First Proposition: the past is needlessly dull.

What makes "the past" dull? Is it the refusal to accept that the realization of utopian political programs is impossible? This might be redescribed as "growing up". It probably is dull to be repeatedly confronted the tenacious disinterest of the external world in realizing anarchist political fantasies. Noam Chomsky, Lysander Spooner, the Paris Commune, the Spanish Civil War and the Wobblies are just too small and evanescent in a world historical context to deserve to be taken seriously. Thus Graebner and Wengrow press various other unsuspecting early civilizations like the Indus or Tlaxcala into exemplary hard labor providing us with historical entertainment as avatars of our lost Golden Age. We are informed that we used to be natural, nonhierarchical, nonviolent, democratic consensus building, sustainable, anarchic and innocent. The plan for the twenty first century is to get our virginity back. This repetitive and strangely segmented book his is Disney history for people that can read. The brick sized seven hundred odd page tome, intended as a "popular" book, is replete with strident special pleading which soon becomes rather trying for readers that don't retain a sense of humor. Disney does historical mythmaking much more economically on the screen than Graebner and Wengrow can do on the page. Dawn is replete with important omissions, rhetorical extravagance, procrustean guesses and unintentional self parody. Graebner and Wengrow do battle with against an army of Straw Man which they claim are white and Western and bad. Without citation we never discover who in specific believes what these convenient scarecrows affirm. For example:

But why then insist that all significant forms of human progress before the twentieth century can be attributed only to that one group of humans who used to refer to themselves as the "the white race" (and now, generally, call themselves by its more accepted synonym "Western civilization")?...Insisting … that all good things come only from Europe ensures that one's work can be read as a retroactive apology for genocide…"

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

It is time for this Straw Man to lace up the gloves. Let us modify this childish and churlish extravagance, a caricature which no historian I am familiar with endorses, into a factual statement which is as true as it is unpopular (and perhaps “dull” and “dire” as well): In the last five hundred years, a vastly disproportionate number of the greatest achievements of our species were created by a small number of elite Western males. Full stop. For twelve or fifteen centuries before that, the Chinese contributed by far the most important achievements to the stock of human advances. Before that, the Mediterranean Greco-Roman culture back to about 600 BC produced a greatly disproportionate number of contributions to our common history and before that the cluster of river valley civilizations from the Sudan and Egypt on the Nile to the Tigris-Euphrates to the Indus to the Oxus were at the cutting edge of human achievement until we go all the way back to the Yamnaya of the central Asian steppes who first realized the powerful technological synergy of connecting the domesticated horse and the wheel about 3000 BC. Then back to the eastern Anatolian plain around 10,000 BC at Gobekli Tepe and related sites in Eastern Turkey where social complexity and monumental architecture first emerged. Before that the neolithic emergence of symbolism probably happened in multiple places and times.

Dawn is awash in caricatures and a mighty procession of Straw Men doomed to be sacrificed like Aztec prisoners on a big holiday, as when we are informed that Steven Pinker’s work “can be read” as a retroactive apology for Western genocide because of his unseemly realism. It is hard to see why it is not equally true that Dawn “can be read” as a retroactive apology for nonwestern genocide, (for which there is an immense body of evidence) which often differs in technological sophistication and sometimes in scale, but never in moral virtue from European atrocities. I have no interest in any sort of eristic chin music “debate” with anybody from any political perspective about whose atrocities were the best and worst or worse and better, simply because the idea of distinguishing the good atrocities in history from the evil ones is insane.

Graebner and Wengrow indict the West as the unique historical avatar of evil on a Miltonic scale. No jeremiad will drive political hysteria maximally unless it produces a scapegoat and this is the rise of the West in Dawn. The rise of the West since 1500 is treated as a uniquely violent, evil, inexcusable catastrophe, unlike anything else in history, an unforgivable violation of natural moral law for which no atonement can ever be sufficient. This book sags under the burden of such moral histrionics that cannot be salvaged and should have been tossed by an editor early on. Dawn would be twice as valuable if it were half as long. This strident, cetacean text desperately needs an editor wielding a flensing knife, not a scalpel. The endless underdogging and intellectual ventriloquism and wishful thinking and avoidable errors will quickly become rather trying to readers who know what they are talking about.

Consider this breakthrough:

In fact, the terms “equality” and “inequality” only began to enter common currency in the early seventeenth century, under the influence of natural law theory. And natural law theory, in turn, arose largely in the course of debates over the moral and legal implications of Europe’s discoveries in the New World.

This is not dull. However, this isn’t even wrong. There is nothing for a serious historian to talk about. Natural law theory had been the official doctrine of the Catholic Church since the time of Thomas Aquinas. Thomas got his natural law theory from the Hellenistic Stoics. Graebner and Wengrow seem simply unaware of the monotheistic source of the idea that all souls are equal in the sight of God, as in Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither slave nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Jerusalem is in fact the source of the idea of human equality in Western history, not Greece, not Rome, not a fictional character based on an eloquent 17th century Indian inhabitant of New France. Aquinas welded Christian equality onto Stoic Natural law in his “medieval synthesis”. The “indigenous critique” of the West was not even remotely close to being the neglected true cause of human equality and natural law theory, which Dawn informs us were newly invented in the seventeenth century. When writing intellectual history, there are many advantages to not being off by two millennia so you can add to the mythic inflation of your favorite historical heroes.

Consider this unintentional dark humor:

The democratic governance of the Wendat (Huron) and Five Nations of the Haudeosaunee (Iroquois League) which so impressed later European readers, was an expression of the same principle: if no compulsion was allowed, then obviously such social coherence as did exist had to be created through reasoned debate, persuasive arguments and the establishment of social consensus.

It is an idyllic image, Disney Indians awash in prelapsarian virtue, grooving sustainably with nature, spontaneously forming democratic government to create rational social consensus among tribes driven by the principle of nonviolence. Bush hippies as natural philosophers creating Habermas’ ideal speech situation in the forest surely is not dull. Moreover, then and now the impressive social coherence which egalitarian, noncoercive, reasoned democratic debate both within and between tribes like the Wendat and Iroquois Confederation is a standing moral reproach for vicious, violent, death dealing, destructive civilizations like our own. Graebner and Wengrow note almost five hundred pages later that one of the piquant egalitarian customs of the paleo-Gandhian, consensus building, rational Wendat was torturing to death captive enemies, a custom they shared with many others indigenous groups, but Graebner and Wengrow make excuses for this proclivity by claiming it was the Wendat way of telling their people not to be violent toward each other. This is the goofiest apologia for torturing people to death I have ever read. Would this kind of underwhelming special pleading be tolerated if the torturers were French or Spanish or Dutch and we were offered some lame excuse that normalizes this abomination as being a culturally idiomatic way for Europeans to remind themselves to be angelic toward their countrymen? Of course not, but the Wendat are indigenous, so like Jesus they are incapable of sin. When reading Dawn, conceptually putting the shoe on the other foot often reveals the disingenuous special pleading and dubious, controversial moral assumptions that are implicit in their framing.

It takes almost another five hundred pages to interrupt this moist, hommage-to-Rousseau reverie with an intrusive historical fact that erupted while all this rational democratic debate was precociously solving indigenous disputes without violence. The Iroquois Confederacy attacked and all but exterminated the Wendat during the Beaver Wars of 1648-9.

We can now rewrite the conclusion of the Graeber and Wengrow’s above historical joke complete with the absent punch line as a conceptual debutante, making its initial introduction to historical reality.

The democratic governance of the Wendat (Huron) and Five Nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois League) which so impressed later European readers, was an expression of the same principle: if no compulsion was allowed, then obviously such social coherence as did exist had to be created through reasoned debate, persuasive arguments, and the establishment of social consensus or genocide.

Perhaps this is not boring, but this grim joke is not funny and not even wrong.

2) Graebner and Wengrow’s next proposition is that historical realism has “dire political implications”.

This is a good day to grow up. Yes, adults who are historically literate know the world can be improved but not perfected and this dire condition can be terrifying to adolescents of any age. Cancer has dire health implications, but rejecting oncology in favor of homeopathic make believe is a bad idea because a detachment from reality will get you killed. Welcome to Entzauberung. Here are some of “dire” political implications real history contains: human life can be improved but not perfected, trying to realize Utopia is catastrophic in practice; a good regime in practice deploys violence to the minimum extent necessary to maintain public order and safety: the reduction of violence is at best asymptotic, never reaching zero. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity are all good things but in some cases they make conflicting demands which resist univocal solutions. Violence is not always wrong, some wars are just, but far fewer than we believe. Wealth is not an evil, the misuse of wealth is an evil. Bertrand Russell correctly skewered, “the superior virtue of the oppressed” because it has as much historical reality as Bigfoot and all the underdogging in the world will not turn winners into devils nor losers into saints or vice versa. This primitive Manicheanism ignores the reality of self and society, both of which are more complex than that. We are one species operating under different constraints.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

We are adaptive, social, competitive and hierarchical but also cooperative, teachable, compassionate and capable of self improvement. Mencius probably saw the flaws and potential of human nature most capaciously. The rejection of realism in favor of nostalgia for a chimerical lost innocence offers us a thrilling panoply of imaginary solutions to our all too real political problems. One of the authors of Dawn, David Graebner was involved with the "Occupy Wall Street" movement which proved to be a massively hopeful mosquito imagining itself having a decisive impact on the windshield of capitalism. Such is the power of make believe.

Anarchism, primitivism and such are the sequelae of violent historical trauma, a symptom of spiritual malaise in a civilization. Graebner and Wengrow are utopian political thinkers who acknowledge candidly what the too cute by half 1619 "Project" does not: alternative history is a literary exercise in political mythmaking. It is hard not to share their weary dismay at the state of the world and concede that rage and madness and cruelty and malice make up a dispiritingly large portion of our common history and our world and ourselves. Every hellscape we encounter increases our longing for redemption within the New Jerusalem. As Rene Girard points out, the universal human confrontation with guilt prompts a search for a scapegoat, which is what Dawn serves up, a new Fall of Man myth. Outside the guild of professional historians, history written by amateurs with an idee fixe to vindicate are met with eyerolls and lethal margin notes and the weary sense that they are too often plagued by highly touted "new" history books which are praised extravagantly by the political partisans they pander to. Upon examination these underwhelming texts turn out to be the most important book of the last fifteen minutes, an intellectual landmark for spiritually confused systems analysts ensorcelled by the paleo diet.

We are informed by Graebner and Wengrow that imagination will prevail over violence, but if so I wonder why hasn't it triumphed already, say, in the Children's Crusade, when thousands of juvenile Crusaders boarded ship hoping to miraculously conquer Jerusalem but instead were sold into Islamic slavery; or Germanic warriors painting themselves blue in order to be safe in battle against Roman legions, creating acres of blue bodies after battles; or the concept of "spectral evidence" invoked at Salem in 1692, when hysterical teenage girls claimed that witches tormented them through the agency of invisible "familiars", that only they and the witches themselves could see -the rest used their imaginations to overcome this diabolical violence; the Stalinist make believe science of Lysenkoism resulted in mass famine and lethal political scapegoating, and the contemporary disinformation criminal Alex Jones, stoking millions of imaginations with paranoid fantasies about imaginary abused children that requires an all too real popular uprising involving firearms. There is a far greater danger that the influence of our current political enthusiasms will create a fever swamp of make-believe discourse (Dawn itself is a prime example) like our imaginative forebears did. This is in fact that is already happening in various violent political subgroups. Lyotard claimed that silencing the differend is "terroristic", but on the contrary I think failing to silence Alex Jones is far more terroristic.

If we are lucky, perhaps our anarchist friends will someday explain to us how to imagine away: Covid, atomic weapons, human trafficking, the Sinaloa Cartel, Neo-Nazis organizing on the internet, the North Korean Gulags and the Russian forces in Ukraine. Such is the power of noncoercive, nonviolent anarchy. This is an ironic twenty first century cri de coeur and it is easy to sympathize with the authors' discontents. However anarchism is jejeune and unrealistic because humans are both social and hierarchical animals and there is an inevitably in any society a homeostasis of centripetal and centrifugal forces which it is fatal to disequilibrate. The disgracefully demagogic appeal to popularity made by Graebner and Wengrow when they claim that historical realism appeals only to billionaires (regular folks prefer feel good Disney history that exerts itself to create a better past through make believe) is subintellectual. When we leave their imaginary world and return to reality we will find that regardless of the answer to the question of whether Bill Gates likes or dislikes times tables, multiplication is not by either answer made dubious. There is no hope in this doublethink/doubletalk or in any other make believe. Self-deception is not a plan. As Aristotle pointed out, politics is best suited to adults of seasoned judgement and Thucydides shows us why that is the case The background assumption informing this literary confection is that the universe is what we decide it is because we are the little gods of the earth. The degree of optimism that this sophomoric circle squaring enterprise requires makes Candide look like Diogenes.

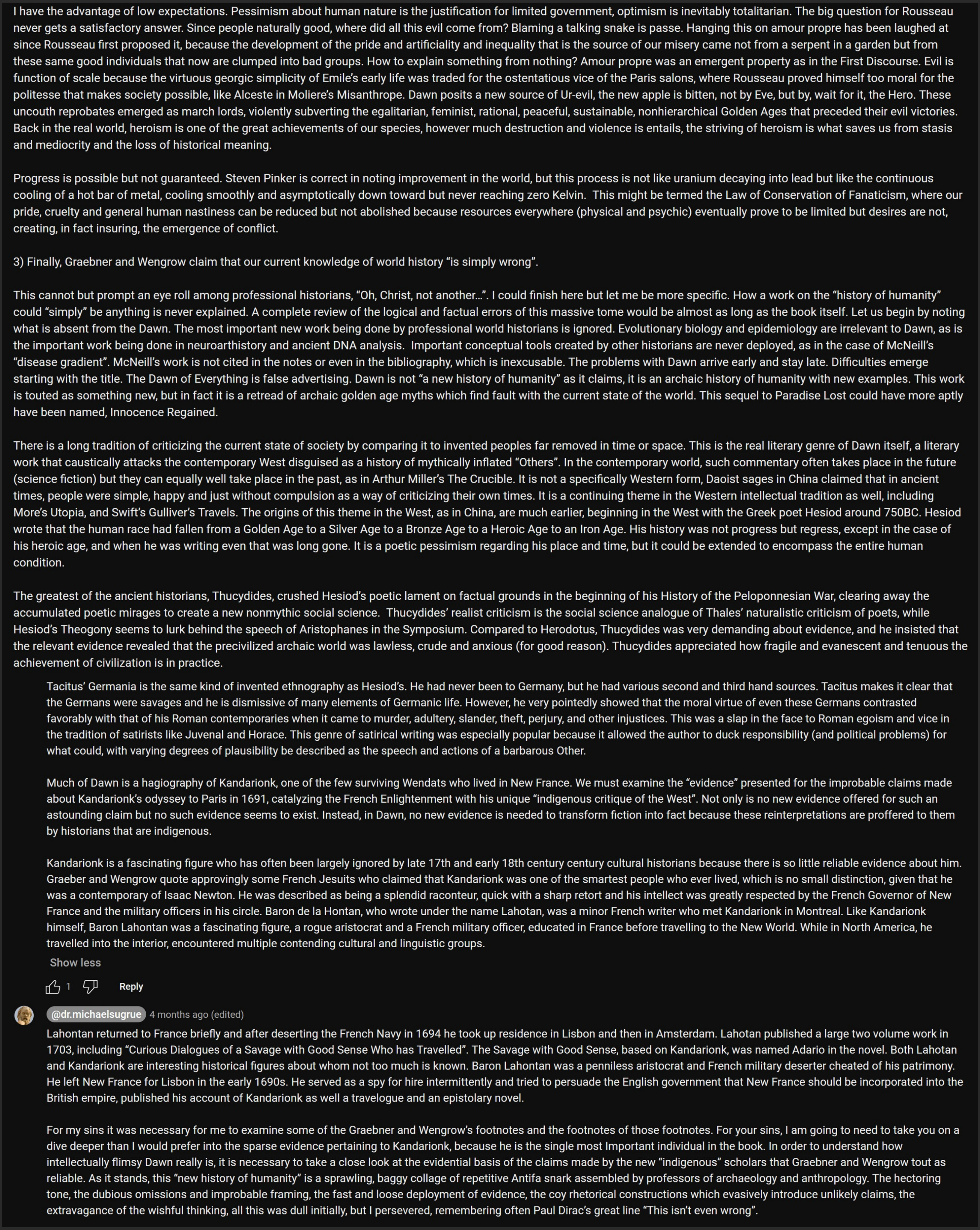
I am perfectly ignorant as to what is there in the history of the twentieth or twenty-first century that would prompt anyone to think, after Verdun and Gallipoli, Dachau and Hiroshima, the Khmer Rouge, the Hutu in Rwanda, the Serbian Tigers, the Argentine Generals, the Red Guard and the current invasion of Ukraine that real people can employ their intrinsic goodness and their magical imaginations to resolve the all too real and unforgiving political problems we face. This is described in Dawn as writing "hopeful" history. I flatly deny this claim. I am a realist. The "alternative" offered by Dawn is as hopeless as it is irresponsible. The only genuine hope we have is to face the world and ourselves as we are and contribute to the moral improvement of the world imperfectly and at best asymptotically within constraints we did not choose. When Graebner and Wengrow asked, "Has "Western civilization" really made life better for everyone?" this sounds to me strangely like my children whinging on a long drive asking me if we are there yet. Their lament amounts to asking why the New Jerusalem is not finished yet because Graebner and Wengrow are impatient with the fact and won't allow their schedules are compromised by the tardiness of the Paradise they demand right now. Moses was denied entry into the Promised Land, but those who feel entitled to an imminent, this worldly salvation never explain what they have done to merit admission. The current intellectual malpractice of comparing the world as it is, not with other historical real world alternatives but with imaginary utopian perfection, secures for "critical" meaning "destructive" discourse an infinite number of topics to complain about. Like the Jacobins and the Khmer Rouge, the hillocks of dead people in historical Utopias testifies to the hybris of critical rationality and the sophomoric optimism of abolishing history.

Graebner and Wengrow point out in the second of their selling points that most history would leave us feeling bored and still worse would make us feel sad. If the external world refuses to keep us edified and entertained by teaching radical utopian politics and ethics, the world is wrong. The alternative to Dawn is a distasteful realism that threatens our souls or rather, our contemporary ersatz substitute for a soul, our "identity". The alternative to this is an Augustinian pessimism about human nature, which may demand the acceptance of historical facts that we may with good reason wish had never happened. Regrettably, history is over and like nature, it has no interest in validating our feelings. Dawn itself would have made me sad if I hadn't found so much of it unintentionally funny. Sweeping Romantic gestures, great quixotic lamentations on Weltschmertz and human imperfection, which is in the young suggests a commendable commitment to hope and aspiration is decidedly seasonal. In experienced scholars who have had the inevitably chastening encounter with imperfection which usually informs the second half of human life, such agitation is embarrassingly sophomoric enthusiasm in those old enough to know better. Like Eric Hobsbawm, the Marxist historian who claimed retrospectively at the end of his career as a Stalinist that fifty million deaths was not an excessive price to pay for Communism even though he knows it to have failed, this is indicative of how the fanatical cruelty of the Wars of Religion was not thwarted by the sweet reason of the Enlightenment, but reappeared with political not religious lingo.

PUT HERE THE BREUGEL ENGRAVING OF A BIG FISH WITH LITTLE FISH IN ITS BELLY

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Bruegel's father and son fishing trip is a visual education about nature, both piscene and human. Long paternal experience becomes self explanatory, the father merely tells him "Ecce", the son sees the symbols within the objects, big fish eat little fish and then humans eat the biggest fish. What will eat these humans remains unanswered but something necessarily eats them too. This is an apt picture of the faux moral innocence of those postcolonial fish eaten during the rise of the Western whale, who are now full of righteous anger at the uniquely unspeakable wickedness of the big fish that swallowed them. Of course, these medium sized fish now do their best to pretend that their history had not involved gorging themselves on the local smaller cultural fish, because then their spurious postcolonial odor of sanctity and outraged virtue would smell more like special pleading combined with hypocrisy combined with spoiled fish. A cursory look at the history of the regional sized cultures, who like Captain Renault in Casablanca are shocked, shocked I tell you, that biggest of cultural big fish are and were not vegans, will reveal that they all killed, subjugated and/or displaced the weaker peoples near them, which explains why they were still in existence when they encountered European explorers after 1492. We are one species under different constraints. The difference is one of scale. Macroparasitism like that of the Mongols, the Vikings, the Assyrians, the Comanche was a highly specialized kind of hunting and gathering, that could only emerge when population increases in civilizations rewards cooperation among nomads. There was and is, no moral difference at all. Zero.



I have the advantage of low expectations. Pessimism about human nature is the justification for limited government, optimism is inevitably totalitarian. The big question for Rousseau never gets a satisfactory answer. Since people naturally good, where did all this evil come from? Blaming a talking snake is passe. Hanging this on amour propre has been laughed at since Rousseau first proposed it, because the development of the pride and artificiality and inequality that is the source of our misery came not from a serpent in a garden but from these same good individuals that now are clumped into bad groups. How to explain something from nothing? Amour propre was an emergent property as in the First Discourse. Evil is function of scale because the virtuous georgic simplicity of Emile's early life was traded for the ostentatious vice of the Paris salons, where Rousseau proved himself too moral for the politesse that makes society possible, like Alceste in Moliere's Misanthrope. Dawn posits a new source of Ur-evil, the new apple is bitten, not by Eve, but by, wait for it, the Hero. These uncouth reprobates emerged as march lords, violently subverting the egalitarian, feminist, rational, peaceful, sustainable, nonhierarchical Golden Ages that preceded their evil victories. Back in the real world, heroism is one of the great achievements of our species, however much destruction and violence is entails, the striving of heroism is what saves us from stasis and mediocrity and the loss of historical meaning.

Progress is possible but not guaranteed. Steven Pinker is correct in noting improvement in the world, but this process is not like uranium decaying into lead but like the continuous cooling of a hot bar of metal, cooling smoothly and asymptotically down toward but never reaching zero Kelvin. This might be termed the Law of Conservation of Fanaticism, where our pride, cruelty and general human nastiness can be reduced but not abolished because resources everywhere (physical and psychic) eventually prove to be limited but desires are not, creating, in fact insuring, the emergence of conflict.

3) Finally, Graebner and Wengrow claim that our current knowledge of world history "is simply wrong".

This cannot but prompt an eye roll among professional historians, "Oh, Christ, not another…". I could finish here but let me be more specific. How a work on the "history of humanity" could "simply" be anything is never explained. A complete review of the logical and factual errors of this massive tome would be almost as long as the book itself. Let us begin by noting what is absent from the Dawn. The most important new work being done by professional world historians is ignored. Evolutionary biology and epidemiology are irrelevant to Dawn, as is the important work being done in neuroarthistory and ancient DNA analysis. Important conceptual tools created by other historians are never deployed, as in the case of McNeill's "disease gradient". McNeill's work is not cited in the notes or even in the bibliography, which is inexcusable. The problems with Dawn arrive early and stay late. Difficulties emerge starting with the title. The Dawn of Everything is false advertising. Dawn is not "a new history of humanity" as it claims, it is an archaic history of humanity with new examples. This work is touted as something new, but in fact it is a retread of archaic golden age myths which find fault with the current state of the world. This sequel to Paradise Lost could have more aptly have been named, Innocence Regained.

There is a long tradition of criticizing the current state of society by comparing it to invented peoples far removed in time or space. This is the real literary genre of Dawn itself, a literary work that caustically attacks the contemporary West disguised as a history of mythically inflated "Others". In the contemporary world, such commentary often takes place in the future (science fiction) but they can equally well take place in the past, as in Arthur Miller's The Crucible. It is not a specifically Western form, Daoist sages in China claimed that in ancient times, people were simple, happy and just without compulsion as a way of criticizing their own times. It is a continuing theme in the Western intellectual tradition as well, including More's Utopia, and Swift's Gulliver's Travels. The origins of this theme in the West, as in China, are much earlier, beginning in the West with the Greek poet Hesiod around 750BC. Hesiod wrote that the human race had fallen from a Golden Age to a Silver Age to a Bronze Age to a Heroic Age to an Iron Age. His history was not progress but regress, except in the case of his heroic age, and when he was writing even that was long gone. It is a poetic pessimism regarding his place and time, but it could be extended to encompass the entire human condition.

The greatest of the ancient historians, Thucydides, crushed Hesiod's poetic lament on factual grounds in the beginning of his History of the Peloponnesian War, clearing away the accumulated poetic mirages to create a new nonmythic social science. Thucydides' realist criticism is the social science analogue of Thales' naturalistic criticism of poets, while Hesiod's Theogony seems to lurk behind the speech of Aristophanes in the Symposium. Compared to Herodotus, Thucydides was very demanding about evidence, and he insisted that the relevant evidence revealed that the precivilized archaic world was lawless, crude and anxious (for good reason). Thucydides appreciated how fragile and evanescent and tenuous the achievement of civilization is in practice.

Tacitus' Germania is the same kind of invented ethnography as Hesiod's. He had never been to Germany, but he had various second and third hand sources. Tacitus makes it clear that the Germans were savages and he is dismissive of many elements of Germanic life. However, he very pointedly showed that the moral virtue of even these Germans contrasted favorably with that of his Roman contemporaries when it came to murder, adultery, slander, theft, perjury, and other injustices. This was a slap in the face to Roman egoism and vice in the tradition of satirists like Juvenal and Horace. This genre of satirical writing was especially popular because it allowed the author to duck responsibility (and political problems) for what could, with varying degrees of plausibility be described as the speech and actions of a barbarous Other.

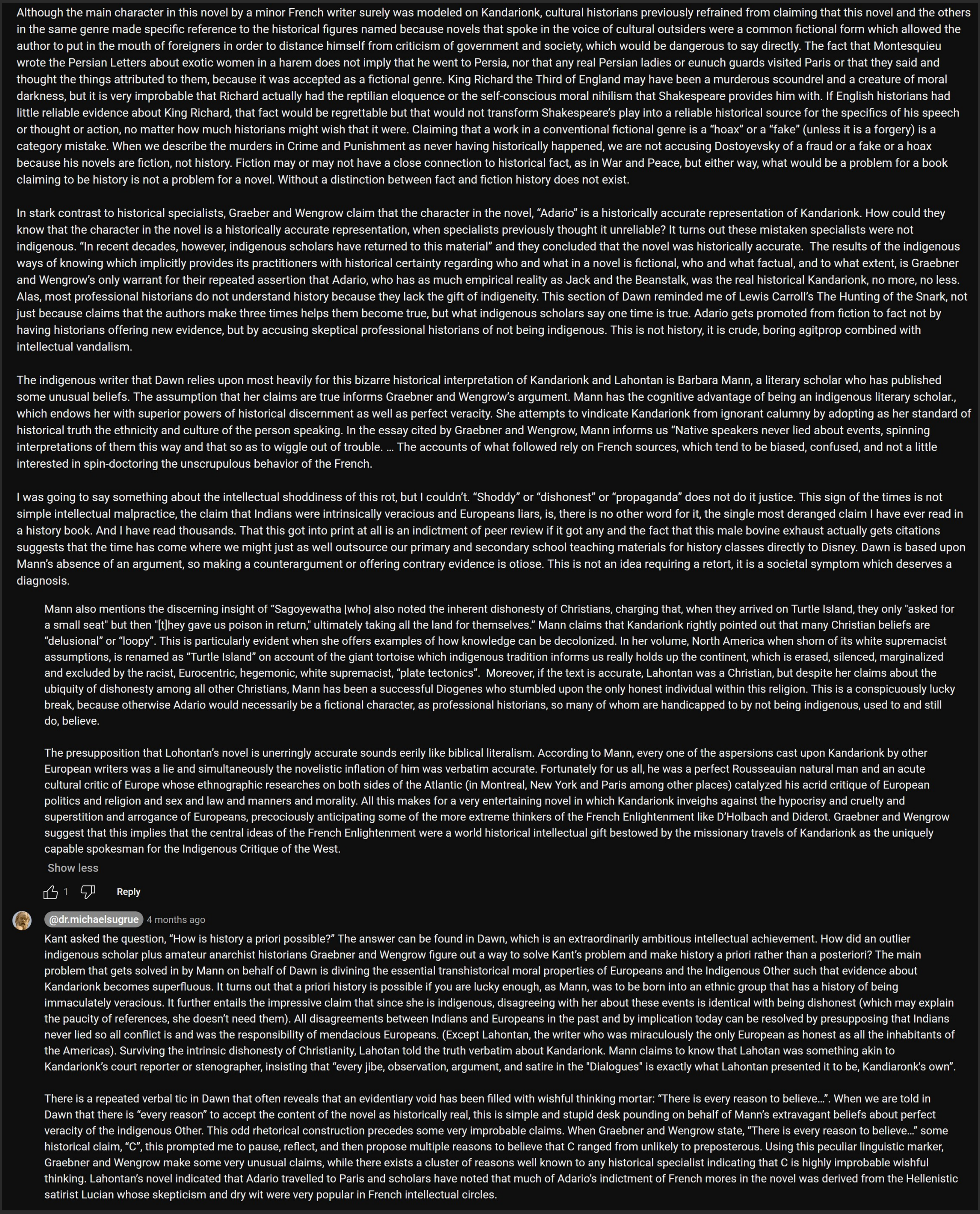
Much of Dawn is a hagiography of Kandarionk, one of the few surviving Wendats who lived in New France. We must examine the "evidence" presented for the improbable claims made about Kandarionk's odyssey to Paris in 1691, catalyzing the French Enlightenment with his unique "indigenous critique of the West". Not only is no new evidence offered for such an astounding claim but no such evidence seems to exist. Instead, in Dawn, no new evidence is needed to transform fiction into fact because these reinterpretations are proffered to them by historians that are indigenous.

Kandarionk is a fascinating figure who has often been largely ignored by late 17th and early 18th century century cultural historians because there is so little reliable evidence about him. Graeber and Wengrow quote approvingly some French Jesuits who claimed that Kandarionk was one of the smartest people who ever lived, which is no small distinction, given that he was a contemporary of Isaac Newton. He was described as being a splendid raconteur, quick with a sharp retort and his intellect was greatly respected by the French Governor of New France and the military officers in his circle. Baron de la Hontan, who wrote under the name Lahotan, was a minor French writer who met Kandarionk in Montreal. Like Kandarionk himself, Baron Lahontan was a fascinating figure, a rogue aristocrat and a French military officer, educated in France before travelling to the New World. While in North America, he travelled into the interior, encountered multiple contending cultural and linguistic groups.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

Lahontan returned to France briefly and after deserting the French Navy in 1694 he took up residence in Lisbon and then in Amsterdam. Lahotan published a large two volume work in 1703, including "Curious Dialogues of a Savage with Good Sense Who has Travelled". The Savage with Good Sense, based on Kandarionk, was named Adario in the novel. Both Lahotan and Kandarionk are interesting historical figures about whom not too much is known. Baron Lahontan was a penniless aristocrat and French military deserter cheated of his patrimony. He left New France for Lisbon in the early 1690s. He served as a spy for hire intermittently and tried to persuade the English government that New France should be incorporated into the British empire, published his account of Kandarionk as well a travelogue and an epistolary novel.

For my sins it was necessary for me to examine some of the Graebner and Wengrow's footnotes and the footnotes of those footnotes. For your sins, I am going to need to take you on a dive deeper than I would prefer into the sparse evidence pertaining to Kandarionk, because he is the single most Important individual in the book. In order to understand how intellectually flimsy Dawn really is, it is necessary to take a close look at the evidential basis of the claims made by the new "indigenous" scholars that Graebner and Wengrow tout as reliable. As it stands, this "new history of humanity" is a sprawling, baggy collage of repetitive Antifa snark assembled by professors of archaeology and anthropology. The hectoring tone, the dubious omissions and improbable framing, the fast and loose deployment of evidence, the coy rhetorical constructions which evasively introduce unlikely claims, the extravagance of the wishful thinking, all this was dull initially, but I persevered, remembering often Paul Dirac's great line "This isn't even wrong".



Although the main character in this novel by a minor French writer surely was modeled on Kandarionk, cultural historians previously refrained from claiming that this novel and the others in the same genre made specific reference to the historical figures named because novels that spoke in the voice of cultural outsiders were a common fictional form which allowed the author to put in the mouth of foreigners in order to distance himself from criticism of government and society, which would be dangerous to say directly. The fact that Montesquieu wrote the Persian Letters about exotic women in a harem does not imply that he went to Persia, nor that any real Persian ladies or eunuch guards visited Paris or that they said and thought the things attributed to them, because it was accepted as a fictional genre. King Richard the Third of England may have been a murderous scoundrel and a creature of moral darkness, but it is very improbable that Richard actually had the reptilian eloquence or the self-conscious moral nihilism that Shakespeare provides him with. If English historians had little reliable evidence about King Richard, that fact would be regrettable but that would not transform Shakespeare's play into a reliable historical source for the specifics of his speech or thought or action, no matter how much historians might wish that it were. Claiming that a work in a conventional fictional genre is a "hoax" or a "fake" (unless it is a forgery) is a category mistake. When we describe the murders in Crime and Punishment as never having historically happened, we are not accusing Dostoyevsky of a fraud or a fake or a hoax because his novels are fiction, not history. Fiction may or may not have a close connection to historical fact, as in War and Peace, but either way, what would be a problem for a book claiming to be history is not a problem for a novel. Without a distinction between fact and fiction history does not exist.

In stark contrast to historical specialists, Graeber and Wengrow claim that the character in the novel, "Adario" is a historically accurate representation of Kandarionk. How could they know that the character in the novel is a historically accurate representation, when specialists previously thought it unreliable? It turns out these mistaken specialists were not indigenous. "In recent decades, however, indigenous scholars have returned to this material" and they concluded that the novel was historically accurate. The results of the indigenous ways of knowing which implicitly provides its practitioners with historical certainty regarding who and what in a novel is fictional, who and what factual, and to what extent, is Graebner and Wengrow's only warrant for their repeated assertion that Adario, who has as much empirical reality as Jack and the Beanstalk, was the real historical Kandarionk, no more, no less. Alas, most professional historians do not understand history because they lack the gift of indigeneity. This section of Dawn reminded me of Lewis Carroll's The Hunting of the Snark, not just because claims that the authors make three times helps them become true, but what indigenous scholars say one time is true. Adario gets promoted from fiction to fact not by having historians offering new evidence, but by accusing skeptical professional historians of not being indigenous. This is not history, it is crude, boring agitprop combined with intellectual vandalism.

The indigenous writer that Dawn relies upon most heavily for this bizarre historical interpretation of Kandarionk and Lahontan is Barbara Mann, a literary scholar who has published some unusual beliefs. The assumption that her claims are true informs Graebner and Wengrow's argument. Mann has the cognitive advantage of being an indigenous literary scholar., which endows her with superior powers of historical discernment as well as perfect veracity. She attempts to vindicate Kandarionk from ignorant calumny by adopting as her standard of historical truth the ethnicity and culture of the person speaking. In the essay cited by Graebner and Wengrow, Mann informs us "Native speakers never lied about events, spinning interpretations of them this way and that so as to wiggle out of trouble. … The accounts of what followed rely on French sources, which tend to be biased, confused, and not a little interested in spin-doctoring the unscrupulous behavior of the French.

I was going to say something about the intellectual shoddiness of this rot, but I couldn't. "Shoddy" or "dishonest" or "propaganda" does not do it justice. This sign of the times is not simple intellectual malpractice, the claim that Indians were intrinsically veracious and Europeans liars, is, there is no other word for it, the single most deranged claim I have ever read in a history book. And I have read thousands. That this got into print at all is an indictment of peer review if it got any and the fact that this male bovine exhaust actually gets citations suggests that the time has come where we might just as well outsource our primary and secondary school teaching materials for history classes directly to Disney. Dawn is based upon Mann's absence of an argument, so making a counterargument or offering contrary evidence is otiose. This is not an idea requiring a retort, it is a societal symptom which deserves a diagnosis.

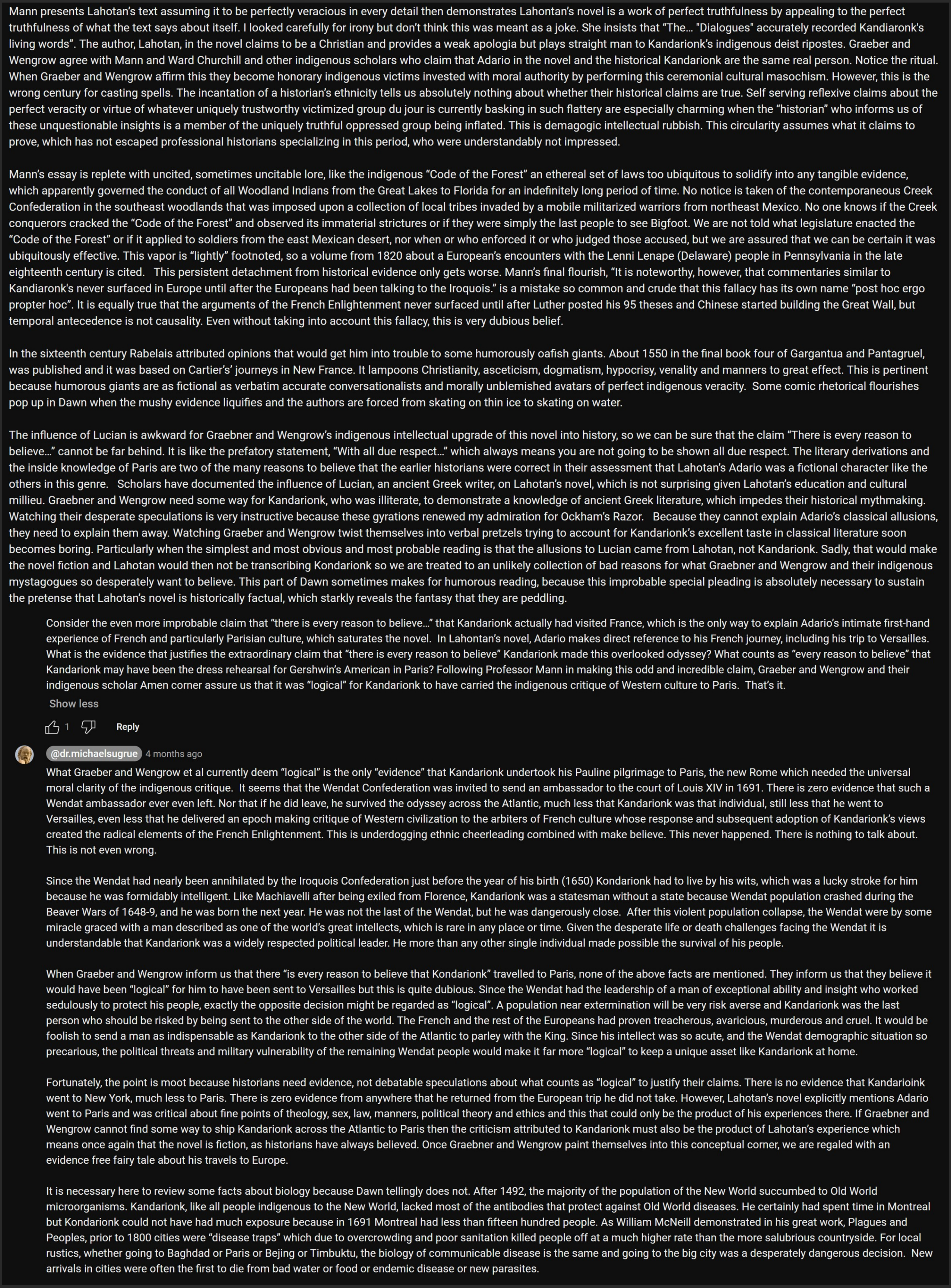
Mann also mentions the discerning insight of "Sagoyewatha [who] also noted the inherent dishonesty of Christians, charging that, when they arrived on Turtle Island, they only "asked for a small seat" but then "[t]hey gave us poison in return," ultimately taking all the land for themselves." Mann claims that Kandarionk rightly pointed out that many Christian beliefs are "delusional" or "loopy". This is particularly evident when she offers examples of how knowledge can be decolonized. In her volume, North America when shorn of its white supremacist assumptions, is renamed as "Turtle Island" on account of the giant tortoise which indigenous tradition informs us really holds up the continent, which is erased, silenced, marginalized and excluded by the racist, Eurocentric, hegemonic, white supremacist, "plate tectonics". Moreover, if the text is accurate, Lahontan was a Christian, but despite her claims about the ubiquity of dishonesty among all other Christians, Mann has been a successful Diogenes who stumbled upon the only honest individual within this religion. This is a conspicuously lucky break, because otherwise Adario would necessarily be a fictional character, as professional historians, so many of whom are handicapped to by not being indigenous, used to and still do, believe.

The presupposition that Lohontan's novel is unerringly accurate sounds eerily like biblical literalism. According to Mann, every one of the aspersions cast upon Kandarionk by other European writers was a lie and simultaneously the novelistic inflation of him was verbatim accurate. Fortunately for us all, he was a perfect Rousseauian natural man and an acute cultural critic of Europe whose ethnographic researches on both sides of the Atlantic (in Montreal, New York and Paris among other places) catalyzed his acrid critique of European politics and religion and sex and law and manners and morality. All this makes for a very entertaining novel in which Kandarionk inveighs against the hypocrisy and cruelty and superstition and arrogance of Europeans, precociously anticipating some of the more extreme thinkers of the French Enlightenment like D'Holbach and Diderot. Graebner and Wengrow suggest that this implies that the central ideas of the French Enlightenment were a world historical intellectual gift bestowed by the missionary travels of Kandarionk as the uniquely capable spokesman for the Indigenous Critique of the West.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

Kant asked the question, "How is history a priori possible?" The answer can be found in Dawn, which is an extraordinarily ambitious intellectual achievement. How did an outlier indigenous scholar plus amateur anarchist historians Graebner and Wengrow figure out a way to solve Kant's problem and make history a priori rather than a posteriori? The main problem that gets solved in by Mann on behalf of Dawn is divining the essential transhistorical moral properties of Europeans and the Indigenous Other such that evidence about Kandarionk becomes superfluous. It turns out that a priori history is possible if you are lucky enough, as Mann, was to be born into an ethnic group that has a history of being immaculately veracious. It further entails the impressive claim that since she is indigenous, disagreeing with her about these events is identical with being dishonest (which may explain the paucity of references, she doesn't need them). All disagreements between Indians and Europeans in the past and by implication today can be resolved by presupposing that Indians never lied so all conflict is and was the responsibility of mendacious Europeans. (Except Lahontan, the writer who was miraculously the only European as honest as all the inhabitants of the Americas). Surviving the intrinsic dishonesty of Christianity, Lahotan told the truth verbatim about Kandarionk. Mann claims to know that Lahotan was something akin to Kandarionk's court reporter or stenographer, insisting that "every jibe, observation, argument, and satire in the "Dialogues" is exactly what Lahontan presented it to be, Kandiaronk's own".

There is a repeated verbal tic in Dawn that often reveals that an evidentiary void has been filled with wishful thinking mortar: "There is every reason to believe…". When we are told in Dawn that there is "every reason" to accept the content of the novel as historically real, this is simple and stupid desk pounding on behalf of Mann's extravagant beliefs about perfect veracity of the indigenous Other. This odd rhetorical construction precedes some very improbable claims. When Graebner and Wengrow state, "There is every reason to believe…" some historical claim, "C", this prompted me to pause, reflect, and then propose multiple reasons to believe that C ranged from unlikely to preposterous. Using this peculiar linguistic marker, Graebner and Wengrow make some very unusual claims, while there exists a cluster of reasons well known to any historical specialist indicating that C is highly improbable wishful thinking. Lahontan's novel indicated that Adario travelled to Paris and scholars have noted that much of Adario's indictment of French mores in the novel was derived from the Hellenistic satirist Lucian whose skepticism and dry wit were very popular in French intellectual circles.



Mann presents Lahotan's text assuming it to be perfectly veracious in every detail then demonstrates Lahontan's novel is a work of perfect truthfulness by appealing to the perfect truthfulness of what the text says about itself. I looked carefully for irony but don't think this was meant as a joke. She insists that "The… "Dialogues" accurately recorded Kandiaronk's living words". The author, Lahotan, in the novel claims to be a Christian and provides a weak apologia but plays straight man to Kandarionk's indigenous deist ripostes. Graeber and Wengrow agree with Mann and Ward Churchill and other indigenous scholars who claim that Adario in the novel and the historical Kandarionk are the same real person. Notice the ritual. When Graeber and Wengrow affirm this they become honorary indigenous victims invested with moral authority by performing this ceremonial cultural masochism. However, this is the wrong century for casting spells. The incantation of a historian's ethnicity tells us absolutely nothing about whether their historical claims are true. Self serving reflexive claims about the perfect veracity or virtue of whatever uniquely trustworthy victimized group du jour is currently basking in such flattery are especially charming when the "historian" who informs us of these unquestionable insights is a member of the uniquely truthful oppressed group being inflated. This is demagogic intellectual rubbish. This circularity assumes what it claims to prove, which has not escaped professional historians specializing in this period, who were understandably not impressed.

Mann's essay is replete with uncited, sometimes uncitable lore, like the indigenous "Code of the Forest" an ethereal set of laws too ubiquitous to solidify into any tangible evidence, which apparently governed the conduct of all Woodland Indians from the Great Lakes to Florida for an indefinitely long period of time. No notice is taken of the contemporaneous Creek Confederation in the southeast woodlands that was imposed upon a collection of local tribes invaded by a mobile militarized warriors from northeast Mexico. No one knows if the Creek conquerors cracked the "Code of the Forest" and observed its immaterial strictures or if they were simply the last people to see Bigfoot. We are not told what legislature enacted the "Code of the Forest" or if it applied to soldiers from the east Mexican desert, nor when or who enforced it or who judged those accused, but we are assured that we can be certain it was ubiquitously effective. This vapor is "lightly" footnoted, so a volume from 1820 about a European's encounters with the Lenni Lenape (Delaware) people in Pennsylvania in the late eighteenth century is cited.   This persistent detachment from historical evidence only gets worse. Mann's final flourish, "It is noteworthy, however, that commentaries similar to Kandiaronk's never surfaced in Europe until after the Europeans had been talking to the Iroquois." is a mistake so common and crude that this fallacy has its own name "post hoc ergo propter hoc". It is equally true that the arguments of the French Enlightenment never surfaced until after Luther posted his 95 theses and Chinese started building the Great Wall, but temporal antecedence is not causality. Even without taking into account this fallacy, this is very dubious belief.

In the sixteenth century Rabelais attributed opinions that would get him into trouble to some humorously oafish giants. About 1550 in the final book four of Gargantua and Pantagruel, was published and it was based on Cartier's' journeys in New France. It lampoons Christianity, asceticism, dogmatism, hypocrisy, venality and manners to great effect. This is pertinent because humorous giants are as fictional as verbatim accurate conversationalists and morally unblemished avatars of perfect indigenous veracity. Some comic rhetorical flourishes pop up in Dawn when the mushy evidence liquifies and the authors are forced from skating on thin ice to skating on water.

The influence of Lucian is awkward for Graebner and Wengrow's indigenous intellectual upgrade of this novel into history, so we can be sure that the claim "There is every reason to believe…" cannot be far behind. It is like the prefatory statement, "With all due respect…" which always means you are not going to be shown all due respect. The literary derivations and the inside knowledge of Paris are two of the many reasons to believe that the earlier historians were correct in their assessment that Lahotan's Adario was a fictional character like the others in this genre.   Scholars have documented the influence of Lucian, an ancient Greek writer, on Lahotan's novel, which is not surprising given Lahotan's education and cultural millieu. Graebner and Wengrow need some way for Kandarionk, who was illiterate, to demonstrate a knowledge of ancient Greek literature, which impedes their historical mythmaking. Watching their desperate speculations is very instructive because these gyrations renewed my admiration for Ockham's Razor.   Because they cannot explain Adario's classical allusions, they need to explain them away. Watching Graeber and Wengrow twist themselves into verbal pretzels trying to account for Kandarionk's excellent taste in classical literature soon becomes boring. Particularly when the simplest and most obvious and most probable reading is that the allusions to Lucian came from Lahotan, not Kandarionk. Sadly, that would make the novel fiction and Lahotan would then not be transcribing Kondarionk so we are treated to an unlikely collection of bad reasons for what Graebner and Wengrow and their indigenous mystagogues so desperately want to believe. This part of Dawn sometimes makes for humorous reading, because this improbable special pleading is absolutely necessary to sustain the pretense that Lahotan's novel is historically factual, which starkly reveals the fantasy that they are peddling.

Consider the even more improbable claim that "there is every reason to believe…" that Kandarionk actually had visited France, which is the only way to explain Adario's intimate first-hand experience of French and particularly Parisian culture, which saturates the novel. In Lahontan's novel, Adario makes direct reference to his French journey, including his trip to Versailles. What is the evidence that justifies the extraordinary claim that "there is every reason to believe" Kandarionk made this overlooked odyssey? What counts as "every reason to believe" that Kandarionk may have been the dress rehearsal for Gershwin's American in Paris? Following Professor Mann in making this odd and incredible claim, Graeber and Wengrow and their indigenous scholar Amen corner assure us that it was "logical" for Kandarionk to have carried the indigenous critique of Western culture to Paris. That's it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

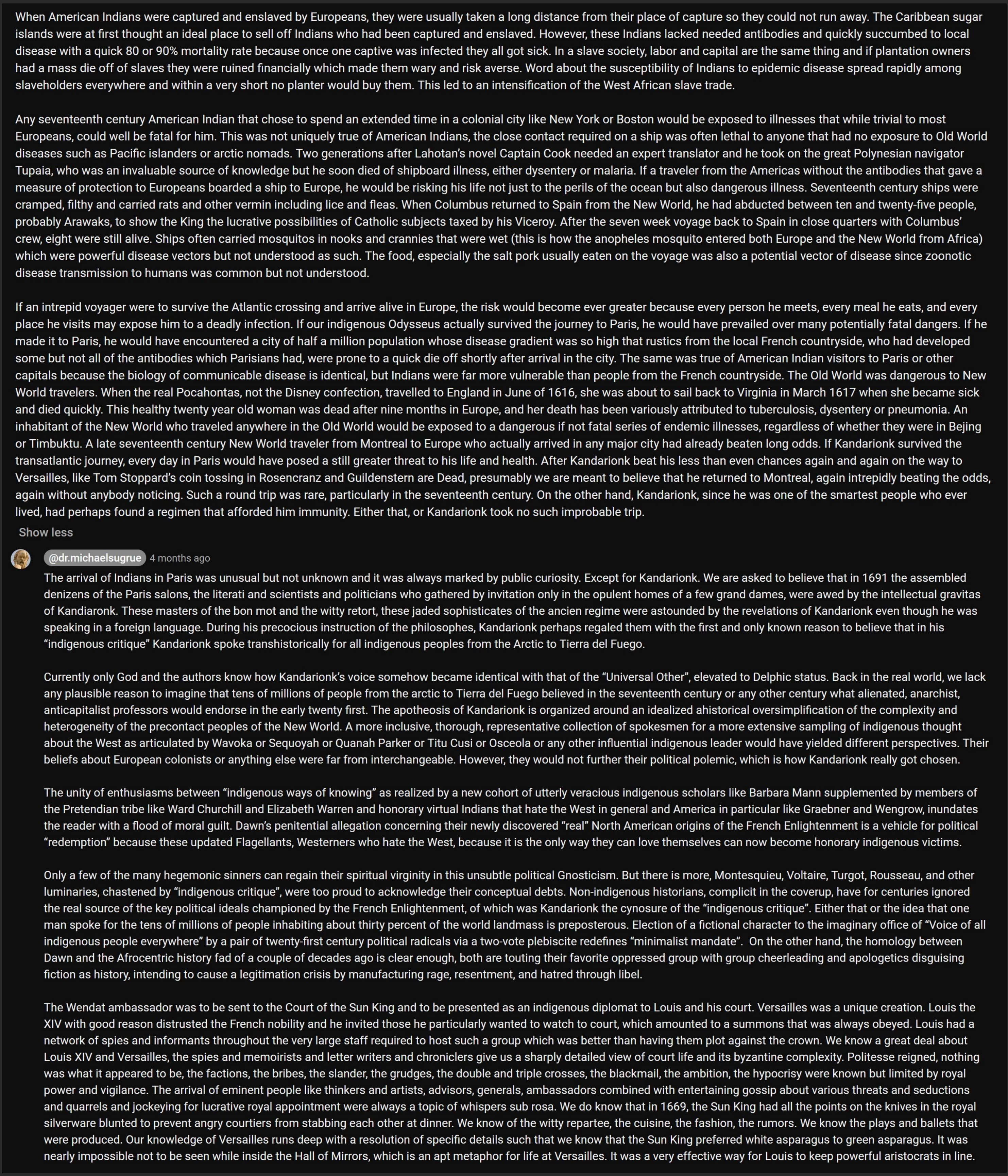
What Graeber and Wengrow et al currently deem "logical" is the only "evidence" that Kandarionk undertook his Pauline pilgrimage to Paris, the new Rome which needed the universal moral clarity of the indigenous critique. It seems that the Wendat Confederation was invited to send an ambassador to the court of Louis XIV in 1691. There is zero evidence that such a Wendat ambassador ever even left. Nor that if he did leave, he survived the odyssey across the Atlantic, much less that Kandarionk was that individual, still less that he went to Versailles, even less that he delivered an epoch making critique of Western civilization to the arbiters of French culture whose response and subsequent adoption of Kandarionk's views created the radical elements of the French Enlightenment. This is underdogging ethnic cheerleading combined with make believe. This never happened. There is nothing to talk about. This is not even wrong.

Since the Wendat had nearly been annihilated by the Iroquois Confederation just before the year of his birth (1650) Kondarionk had to live by his wits, which was a lucky stroke for him because he was formidably intelligent. Like Machiavelli after being exiled from Florence, Kandarionk was a statesman without a state because Wendat population crashed during the Beaver Wars of 1648-9, and he was born the next year. He was not the last of the Wendat, but he was dangerously close. After this violent population collapse, the Wendat were by some miracle graced with a man described as one of the world's great intellects, which is rare in any place or time. Given the desperate life or death challenges facing the Wendat it is understandable that Kandarionk was a widely respected political leader. He more than any other single individual made possible the survival of his people.

When Graeber and Wengrow inform us that there "is every reason to believe that Kondarionk" travelled to Paris, none of the above facts are mentioned. They inform us that they believe it would have been "logical" for him to have been sent to Versailles but this is quite dubious. Since the Wendat had the leadership of a man of exceptional ability and insight who worked sedulously to protect his people, exactly the opposite decision might be regarded as "logical". A population near extermination will be very risk averse and Kandarionk was the last person who should be risked by being sent to the other side of the world. The French and the rest of the Europeans had proven treacherous, avaricious, murderous and cruel. It would be foolish to send a man as indispensable as Kandarionk to the other side of the Atlantic to parley with the King. Since his intellect was so acute, and the Wendat demographic situation so precarious, the political threats and military vulnerability of the remaining Wendat people would make it far more "logical" to keep a unique asset like Kandarionk at home.

Fortunately, the point is moot because historians need evidence, not debatable speculations about what counts as "logical" to justify their claims. There is no evidence that Kandarioink went to New York, much less to Paris. There is zero evidence from anywhere that he returned from the European trip he did not take. However, Lahotan's novel explicitly mentions Adario went to Paris and was critical about fine points of theology, sex, law, manners, political theory and ethics and this that could only be the product of his experiences there. If Graebner and Wengrow cannot find some way to ship Kandarionk across the Atlantic to Paris then the criticism attributed to Kandarionk must also be the product of Lahotan's experience which means once again that the novel is fiction, as historians have always believed. Once Graebner and Wengrow paint themselves into this conceptual corner, we are regaled with an evidence free fairy tale about his travels to Europe.

It is necessary here to review some facts about biology because Dawn tellingly does not. After 1492, the majority of the population of the New World succumbed to Old World microorganisms. Kandarionk, like all people indigenous to the New World, lacked most of the antibodies that protect against Old World diseases. He certainly had spent time in Montreal but Kondarionk could not have had much exposure because in 1691 Montreal had less than fifteen hundred people. As William McNeill demonstrated in his great work, Plagues and Peoples, prior to 1800 cities were "disease traps" which due to overcrowding and poor sanitation killed people off at a much higher rate than the more salubrious countryside. For local rustics, whether going to Baghdad or Paris or Bejing or Timbuktu, the biology of communicable disease is the same and going to the big city was a desperately dangerous decision. New arrivals in cities were often the first to die from bad water or food or endemic disease or new parasites.



When American Indians were captured and enslaved by Europeans, they were usually taken a long distance from their place of capture so they could not run away. The Caribbean sugar islands were at first thought an ideal place to sell off Indians who had been captured and enslaved. However, these Indians lacked needed antibodies and quickly succumbed to local disease with a quick 80 or 90% mortality rate because once one captive was infected they all got sick. In a slave society, labor and capital are the same thing and if plantation owners had a mass die off of slaves they were ruined financially which made them wary and risk averse. Word about the susceptibility of Indians to epidemic disease spread rapidly among slaveholders everywhere and within a very short no planter would buy them. This led to an intensification of the West African slave trade.

Any seventeenth century American Indian that chose to spend an extended time in a colonial city like New York or Boston would be exposed to illnesses that while trivial to most Europeans, could well be fatal for him. This was not uniquely true of American Indians, the close contact required on a ship was often lethal to anyone that had no exposure to Old World diseases such as Pacific islanders or arctic nomads. Two generations after Lahotan's novel Captain Cook needed an expert translator and he took on the great Polynesian navigator Tupaia, who was an invaluable source of knowledge but he soon died of shipboard illness, either dysentery or malaria. If a traveler from the Americas without the antibodies that gave a measure of protection to Europeans boarded a ship to Europe, he would be risking his life not just to the perils of the ocean but also dangerous illness. Seventeenth century ships were cramped, filthy and carried rats and other vermin including lice and fleas. When Columbus returned to Spain from the New World, he had abducted between ten and twenty-five people, probably Arawaks, to show the King the lucrative possibilities of Catholic subjects taxed by his Viceroy. After the seven week voyage back to Spain in close quarters with Columbus' crew, eight were still alive. Ships often carried mosquitos in nooks and crannies that were wet (this is how the anopheles mosquito entered both Europe and the New World from Africa) which were powerful disease vectors but not understood as such. The food, especially the salt pork usually eaten on the voyage was also a potential vector of disease since zoonotic disease transmission to humans was common but not understood.

If an intrepid voyager were to survive the Atlantic crossing and arrive alive in Europe, the risk would become ever greater because every person he meets, every meal he eats, and every place he visits may expose him to a deadly infection. If our indigenous Odysseus actually survived the journey to Paris, he would have prevailed over many potentially fatal dangers. If he made it to Paris, he would have encountered a city of half a million population whose disease gradient was so high that rustics from the local French countryside, who had developed some but not all of the antibodies which Parisians had, were prone to a quick die off shortly after arrival in the city. The same was true of American Indian visitors to Paris or other capitals because the biology of communicable disease is identical, but Indians were far more vulnerable than people from the French countryside. The Old World was dangerous to New World travelers. When the real Pocahontas, not the Disney confection, travelled to England in June of 1616, she was about to sail back to Virginia in March 1617 when she became sick and died quickly. This healthy twenty year old woman was dead after nine months in Europe, and her death has been variously attributed to tuberculosis, dysentery or pneumonia. An inhabitant of the New World who traveled anywhere in the Old World would be exposed to a dangerous if not fatal series of endemic illnesses, regardless of whether they were in Bejing or Timbuktu. A late seventeenth century New World traveler from Montreal to Europe who actually arrived in any major city had already beaten long odds. If Kandarionk survived the transatlantic journey, every day in Paris would have posed a still greater threat to his life and health. After Kandarionk beat his less than even chances again and again on the way to Versailles, like Tom Stoppard's coin tossing in Rosencranz and Guildenstern are Dead, presumably we are meant to believe that he returned to Montreal, again intrepidly beating the odds, again without anybody noticing. Such a round trip was rare, particularly in the seventeenth century. On the other hand, Kandarionk, since he was one of the smartest people who ever lived, had perhaps found a regimen that afforded him immunity. Either that, or Kandarionk took no such improbable trip.

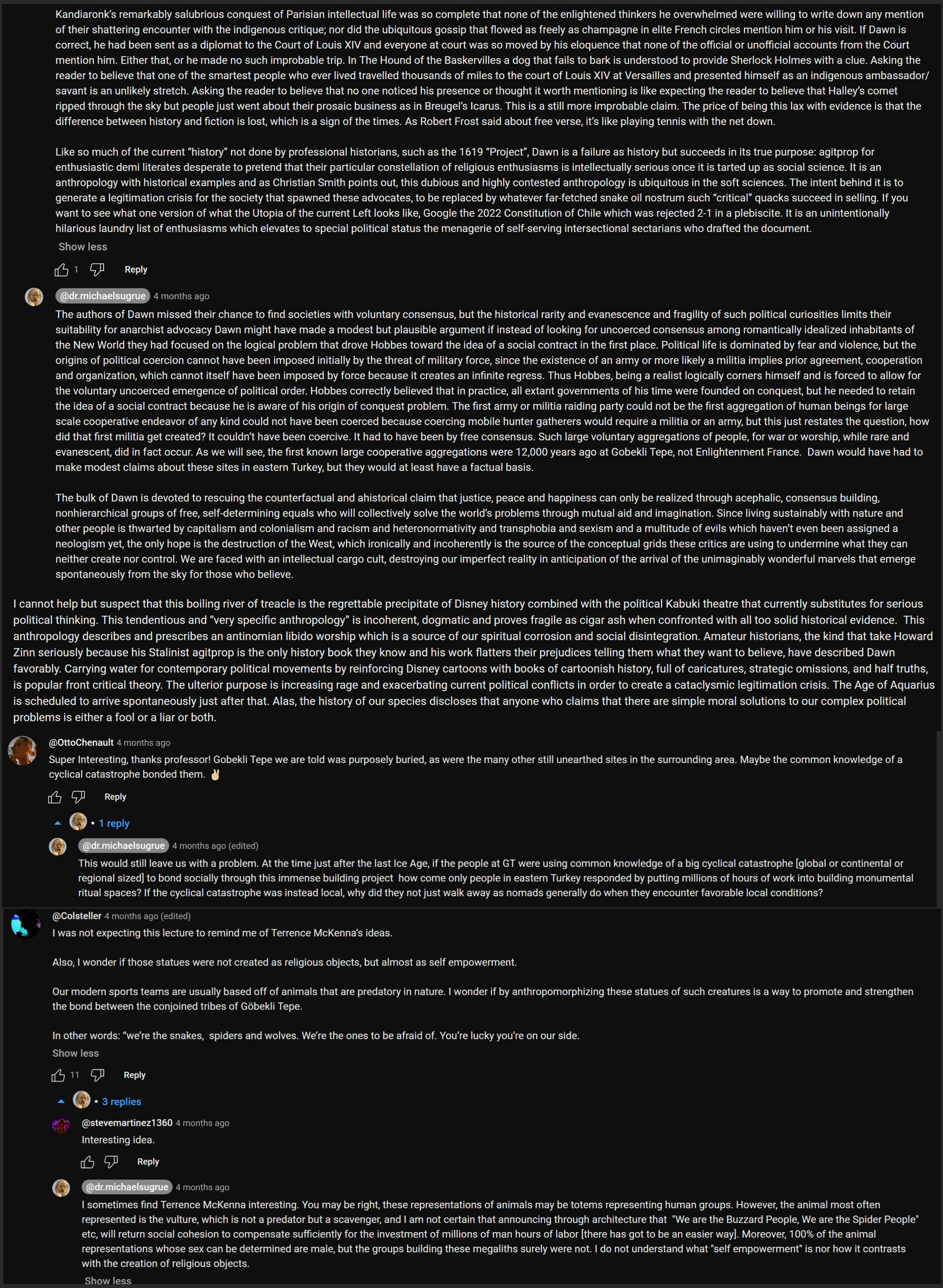
The arrival of Indians in Paris was unusual but not unknown and it was always marked by public curiosity. Except for Kandarionk. We are asked to believe that in 1691 the assembled denizens of the Paris salons, the literati and scientists and politicians who gathered by invitation only in the opulent homes of a few grand dames, were awed by the intellectual gravitas of Kandiaronk. These masters of the bon mot and the witty retort, these jaded sophisticates of the ancien regime were astounded by the revelations of Kandarionk even though he was speaking in a foreign language. During his precocious instruction of the philosophes, Kandarionk perhaps regaled them with the first and only known reason to believe that in his "indigenous critique" Kandarionk spoke transhistorically for all indigenous peoples from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego.

Currently only God and the authors know how Kandarionk's voice somehow became identical with that of the "Universal Other", elevated to Delphic status. Back in the real world, we lack any plausible reason to imagine that tens of millions of people from the arctic to Tierra del Fuego believed in the seventeenth century or any other century what alienated, anarchist, anticapitalist professors would endorse in the early twenty first. The apotheosis of Kandarionk is organized around an idealized ahistorical oversimplification of the complexity and heterogeneity of the precontact peoples of the New World. A more inclusive, thorough, representative collection of spokesmen for a more extensive sampling of indigenous thought about the West as articulated by Wavoka or Sequoyah or Quanah Parker or Titu Cusi or Osceola or any other influential indigenous leader would have yielded different perspectives. Their beliefs about European colonists or anything else were far from interchangeable. However, they would not further their political polemic, which is how Kandarionk really got chosen.

The unity of enthusiasms between "indigenous ways of knowing" as realized by a new cohort of utterly veracious indigenous scholars like Barbara Mann supplemented by members of the Pretendian tribe like Ward Churchill and Elizabeth Warren and honorary virtual Indians that hate the West in general and America in particular like Graebner and Wengrow, inundates the reader with a flood of moral guilt. Dawn's penitential allegation concerning their newly discovered "real" North American origins of the French Enlightenment is a vehicle for political "redemption" because these updated Flagellants, Westerners who hate the West, because it is the only way they can love themselves can now become honorary indigenous victims.

Only a few of the many hegemonic sinners can regain their spiritual virginity in this unsubtle political Gnosticism. But there is more, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Turgot, Rousseau, and other luminaries, chastened by "indigenous critique", were too proud to acknowledge their conceptual debts. Non-indigenous historians, complicit in the coverup, have for centuries ignored the real source of the key political ideals championed by the French Enlightenment, of which was Kandarionk the cynosure of the "indigenous critique". Either that or the idea that one man spoke for the tens of millions of people inhabiting about thirty percent of the world landmass is preposterous. Election of a fictional character to the imaginary office of "Voice of all indigenous people everywhere" by a pair of twenty-first century political radicals via a two-vote plebiscite redefines "minimalist mandate". On the other hand, the homology between Dawn and the Afrocentric history fad of a couple of decades ago is clear enough, both are touting their favorite oppressed group with group cheerleading and apologetics disguising fiction as history, intending to cause a legitimation crisis by manufacturing rage, resentment, and hatred through libel.

The Wendat ambassador was to be sent to the Court of the Sun King and to be presented as an indigenous diplomat to Louis and his court. Versailles was a unique creation. Louis the XIV with good reason distrusted the French nobility and he invited those he particularly wanted to watch to court, which amounted to a summons that was always obeyed. Louis had a network of spies and informants throughout the very large staff required to host such a group which was better than having them plot against the crown. We know a great deal about Louis XIV and Versailles, the spies and memoirists and letter writers and chroniclers give us a sharply detailed view of court life and its byzantine complexity. Politesse reigned, nothing was what it appeared to be, the factions, the bribes, the slander, the grudges, the double and triple crosses, the blackmail, the ambition, the hypocrisy were known but limited by royal power and vigilance. The arrival of eminent people like thinkers and artists, advisors, generals, ambassadors combined with entertaining gossip about various threats and seductions and quarrels and jockeying for lucrative royal appointment were always a topic of whispers sub rosa. We do know that in 1669, the Sun King had all the points on the knives in the royal silverware blunted to prevent angry courtiers from stabbing each other at dinner. We know of the witty repartee, the cuisine, the fashion, the rumors. We know the plays and ballets that were produced. Our knowledge of Versailles runs deep with a resolution of specific details such that we know that the Sun King preferred white asparagus to green asparagus. It was nearly impossible not to be seen while inside the Hall of Mirrors, which is an apt metaphor for life at Versailles. It was a very effective way for Louis to keep powerful aristocrats in line.



Kandiaronk's remarkably salubrious conquest of Parisian intellectual life was so complete that none of the enlightened thinkers he overwhelmed were willing to write down any mention of their shattering encounter with the indigenous critique; nor did the ubiquitous gossip that flowed as freely as champagne in elite French circles mention him or his visit. If Dawn is correct, he had been sent as a diplomat to the Court of Louis XIV and everyone at court was so moved by his eloquence that none of the official or unofficial accounts from the Court mention him. Either that, or he made no such improbable trip. In The Hound of the Baskervilles a dog that fails to bark is understood to provide Sherlock Holmes with a clue. Asking the reader to believe that one of the smartest people who ever lived travelled thousands of miles to the court of Louis XIV at Versailles and presented himself as an indigenous ambassador/ savant is an unlikely stretch. Asking the reader to believe that no one noticed his presence or thought it worth mentioning is like expecting the reader to believe that Halley's comet ripped through the sky but people just went about their prosaic business as in Breugel's Icarus. This is a still more improbable claim. The price of being this lax with evidence is that the difference between history and fiction is lost, which is a sign of the times. As Robert Frost said about free verse, it's like playing tennis with the net down.

Like so much of the current "history" not done by professional historians, such as the 1619 "Project", Dawn is a failure as history but succeeds in its true purpose: agitprop for enthusiastic demi literates desperate to pretend that their particular constellation of religious enthusiasms is intellectually serious once it is tarted up as social science. It is an anthropology with historical examples and as Christian Smith points out, this dubious and highly contested anthropology is ubiquitous in the soft sciences. The intent behind it is to generate a legitimation crisis for the society that spawned these advocates, to be replaced by whatever far-fetched snake oil nostrum such "critical" quacks succeed in selling. If you want to see what one version of what the Utopia of the current Left looks like, Google the 2022 Constitution of Chile which was rejected 2-1 in a plebiscite. It is an unintentionally hilarious laundry list of enthusiasms which elevates to special political status the menagerie of self-serving intersectional sectarians who drafted the document.

Show less

1 Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

The authors of Dawn missed their chance to find societies with voluntary consensus, but the historical rarity and evanescence and fragility of such political curiosities limits their suitability for anarchist advocacy Dawn might have made a modest but plausible argument if instead of looking for uncoerced consensus among romantically idealized inhabitants of the New World they had focused on the logical problem that drove Hobbes toward the idea of a social contract in the first place. Political life is dominated by fear and violence, but the origins of political coercion cannot have been imposed initially by the threat of military force, since the existence of an army or more likely a militia implies prior agreement, cooperation and organization, which cannot itself have been imposed by force because it creates an infinite regress. Thus Hobbes, being a realist logically corners himself and is forced to allow for the voluntary uncoerced emergence of political order. Hobbes correctly believed that in practice, all extant governments of his time were founded on conquest, but he needed to retain the idea of a social contract because he is aware of his origin of conquest problem. The first army or militia raiding party could not be the first aggregation of human beings for large scale cooperative endeavor of any kind could not have been coerced because coercing mobile hunter gatherers would require a militia or an army, but this just restates the question, how did that first militia get created? It couldn't have been coercive. It had to have been by free consensus. Such large voluntary aggregations of people, for war or worship, while rare and evanescent, did in fact occur. As we will see, the first known large cooperative aggregations were 12,000 years ago at Gobekli Tepe, not Enlightenment France. Dawn would have had to make modest claims about these sites in eastern Turkey, but they would at least have a factual basis.

The bulk of Dawn is devoted to rescuing the counterfactual and ahistorical claim that justice, peace and happiness can only be realized through acephalic, consensus building, nonhierarchical groups of free, self-determining equals who will collectively solve the world's problems through mutual aid and imagination. Since living sustainably with nature and other people is thwarted by capitalism and colonialism and racism and heteronormativity and transphobia and sexism and a multitude of evils which haven't even been assigned a neologism yet, the only hope is the destruction of the West, which ironically and incoherently is the source of the conceptual grids these critics are using to undermine what they can neither create nor control. We are faced with an intellectual cargo cult, destroying our imperfect reality in anticipation of the arrival of the unimaginably wonderful marvels that emerge spontaneously from the sky for those who believe.

I cannot help but suspect that this boiling river of treacle is the regrettable precipitate of Disney history combined with the political Kabuki theatre that currently substitutes for serious political thinking. This tendentious and "very specific anthropology" is incoherent, dogmatic and proves fragile as cigar ash when confronted with all too solid historical evidence. This anthropology describes and prescribes an antinomian libido worship which is a source of our spiritual corrosion and social disintegration. Amateur historians, the kind that take Howard Zinn seriously because his Stalinist agitprop is the only history book they know and his work flatters their prejudices telling them what they want to believe, have described Dawn favorably. Carrying water for contemporary political movements by reinforcing Disney cartoons with books of cartoonish history, full of caricatures, strategic omissions, and half truths, is popular front critical theory. The ulterior purpose is increasing rage and exacerbating current political conflicts in order to create a cataclysmic legitimation crisis. The Age of Aquarius is scheduled to arrive spontaneously just after that. Alas, the history of our species discloses that anyone who claims that there are simple moral solutions to our complex political problems is either a fool or a liar or both.

@OttoChenault 4 months ago

Super Interesting, thanks professor! Gobekli Tepe we are told was purposely buried, as were the many other still unearthed sites in the surrounding area. Maybe the common knowledge of a cyclical catastrophe bonded them. ✌️

Reply

1 reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago (edited)

This would still leave us with a problem. At the time just after the last Ice Age, if the people at GT were using common knowledge of a big cyclical catastrophe [global or continental or regional sized] to bond socially through this immense building project how come only people in eastern Turkey responded by putting millions of hours of work into building monumental ritual spaces? If the cyclical catastrophe was instead local, why did they not just walk away as nomads generally do when they encounter favorable local conditions?

@Colsteller 4 months ago (edited)

I was not expecting this lecture to remind me of Terrence McKenna's ideas.

Also, I wonder if those statues were not created as religious objects, but almost as self empowerment.

Our modern sports teams are usually based off of animals that are predatory in nature. I wonder if by anthropomorphizing these statues of such creatures is a way to promote and strengthen the bond between the conjoined tribes of Göbekli Tepe.

In other words: "we're the snakes, spiders and wolves. We're the ones to be afraid of. You're lucky you're on our side.

Show less

11 Reply

3 replies

@stevemartinez1360 4 months ago

Interesting idea.

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 4 months ago

I sometimes find Terrence McKenna interesting. You may be right, these representations of animals may be totems representing human groups. However, the animal most often represented is the vulture, which is not a predator but a scavenger, and I am not certain that announcing through architecture that "We are the Buzzard People, We are the Spider People" etc, will return social cohesion to compensate sufficiently for the investment of millions of man hours of labor [there has got to be an easier way]. Moreover, 100% of the animal representations whose sex can be determined are male, but the groups building these megaliths surely were not. I do not understand what "self empowerment" is nor how it contrasts with the creation of religious objects.

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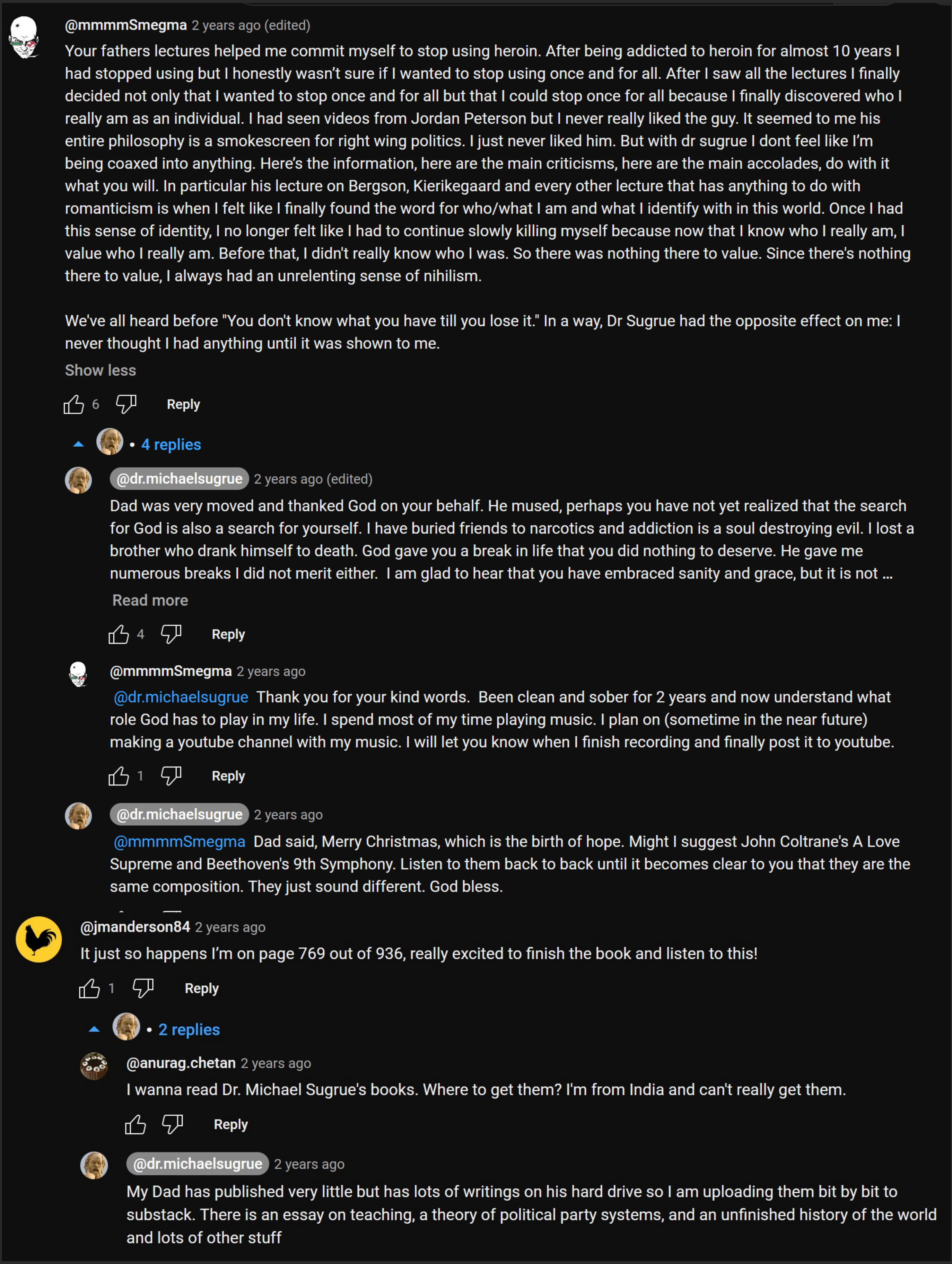
Youtube Community Taps Comments



@mmmmSmegma 2 years ago (edited)

Your fathers lectures helped me commit myself to stop using heroin. After being addicted to heroin for almost 10 years I had stopped using but I honestly wasn't sure if I wanted to stop using once and for all. After I saw all the lectures I finally decided not only that I wanted to stop once and for all but that I could stop once for all because I finally discovered who I really am as an individual. I had seen videos from Jordan Peterson but I never really liked the guy. It seemed to me his entire philosophy is a smokescreen for right wing politics. I just never liked him. But with dr sugrue I dont feel like I'm being coaxed into anything. Here's the information, here are the main criticisms, here are the main accolades, do with it what you will. In particular his lecture on Bergson, Kierikegaard and every other lecture that has anything to do with romanticism is when I felt like I finally found the word for who/what I am and what I identify with in this world. Once I had this sense of identity, I no longer felt like I had to continue slowly killing myself because now that I know who I really am, I value who I really am. Before that, I didn't really know who I was. So there was nothing there to value. Since there's nothing there to value, I always had an unrelenting sense of nihilism.

We've all heard before "You don't know what you have till you lose it." In a way, Dr Sugrue had the opposite effect on me: I never thought I had anything until it was shown to me.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad was very moved and thanked God on your behalf. He mused, perhaps you have not yet realized that the search for God is also a search for yourself. I have buried friends to narcotics and addiction is a soul destroying evil. I lost a brother who drank himself to death. God gave you a break in life that you did nothing to deserve. He gave me numerous breaks I did not merit either. I am glad to hear that you have embraced sanity and grace, but it is not ...

@mmmmSmegma 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Thank you for your kind words. Been clean and sober for 2 years and now understand what role God has to play in my life. I spend most of my time playing music. I plan on (sometime in the near future) making a youtube channel with my music. I will let you know when I finish recording and finally post it to youtube.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@mmmmSmegma Dad said, Merry Christmas, which is the birth of hope. Might I suggest John Coltrane's A Love Supreme and Beethoven's 9th Symphony. Listen to them back to back until it becomes clear to you that they are the same composition. They just sound different. God bless.

@jmanderson84 2 years ago

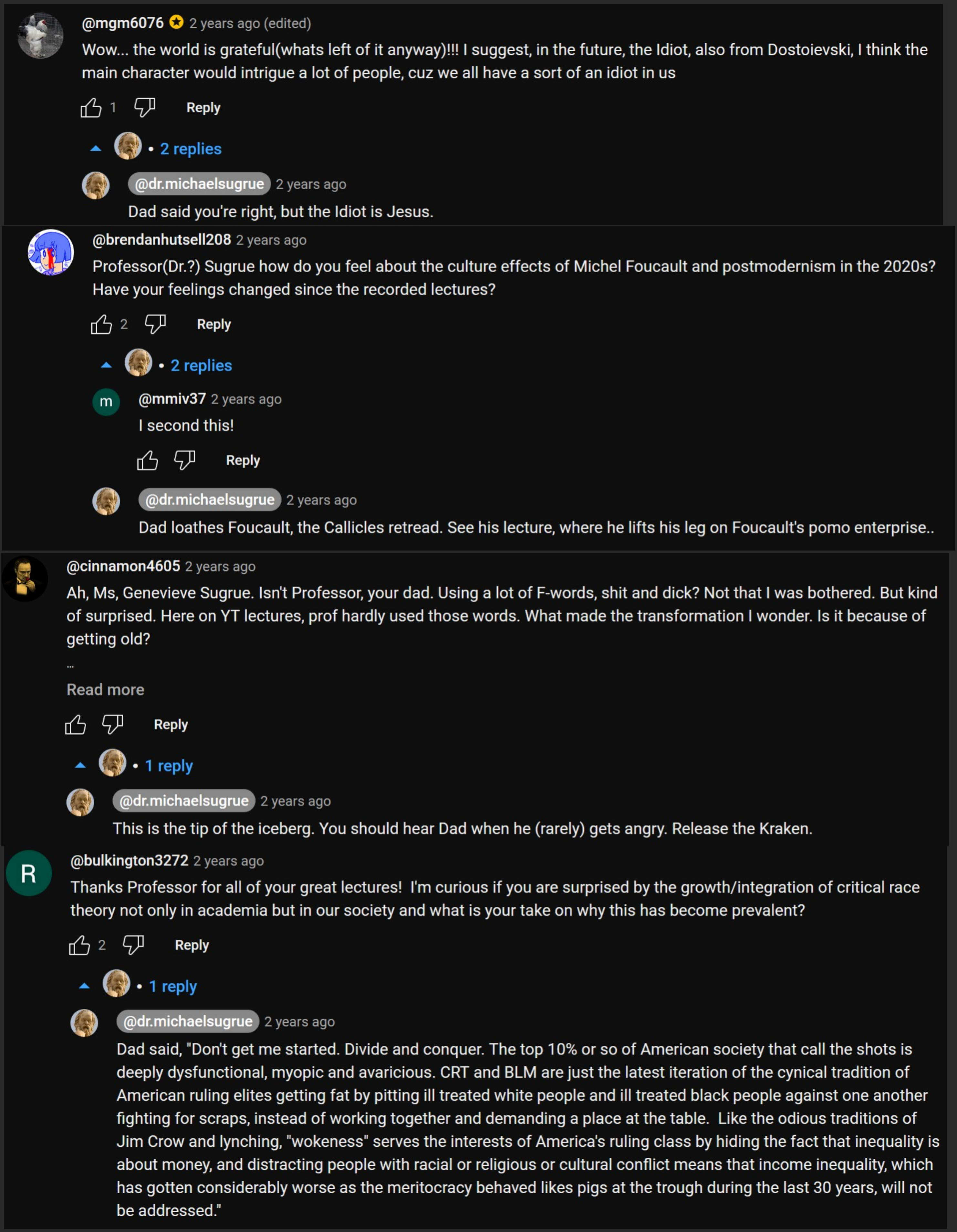
It just so happens I'm on page 769 out of 936, really excited to finish the book and listen to this!

@anurag.chetan 2 years ago

I wanna read Dr. Michael Sugrue's books. Where to get them? I'm from India and can't really get them.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

My Dad has published very little but has lots of writings on his hard drive so I am uploading them bit by bit to substack. There is an essay on teaching, a theory of political party systems, and an unfinished history of the world and lots of other stuff



@mgm6076 2 years ago (edited)

Wow... the world is grateful(whats left of it anyway)!!! I suggest, in the future, the Idiot, also from Dostoievski, I think the main character would intrigue a lot of people, cuz we all have a sort of an idiot in us

1

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said you're right, but the Idiot is Jesus.

@brendanhutsell208 2 years ago

Professor(Dr.?) Sugrue how do you feel about the culture effects of Michel Foucault and postmodernism in the 2020s? Have your feelings changed since the recorded lectures?

2

@mmiv37 2 years ago

I second this!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad loathes Foucault, the Callicles retread. See his lecture, where he lifts his leg on Foucault's pomo enterprise..

@cinnamon4605 2 years ago

Ah, Ms, Genevieve Sugrue. Isn't Professor, your dad. Using a lot of F-words, shit and dick? Not that I was bothered. But kind of surprised. Here on YT lectures, prof hardly used those words. What made the transformation I wonder. Is it because of getting old?

...

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

This is the tip of the iceberg. You should hear Dad when he (rarely) gets angry. Release the Kraken.

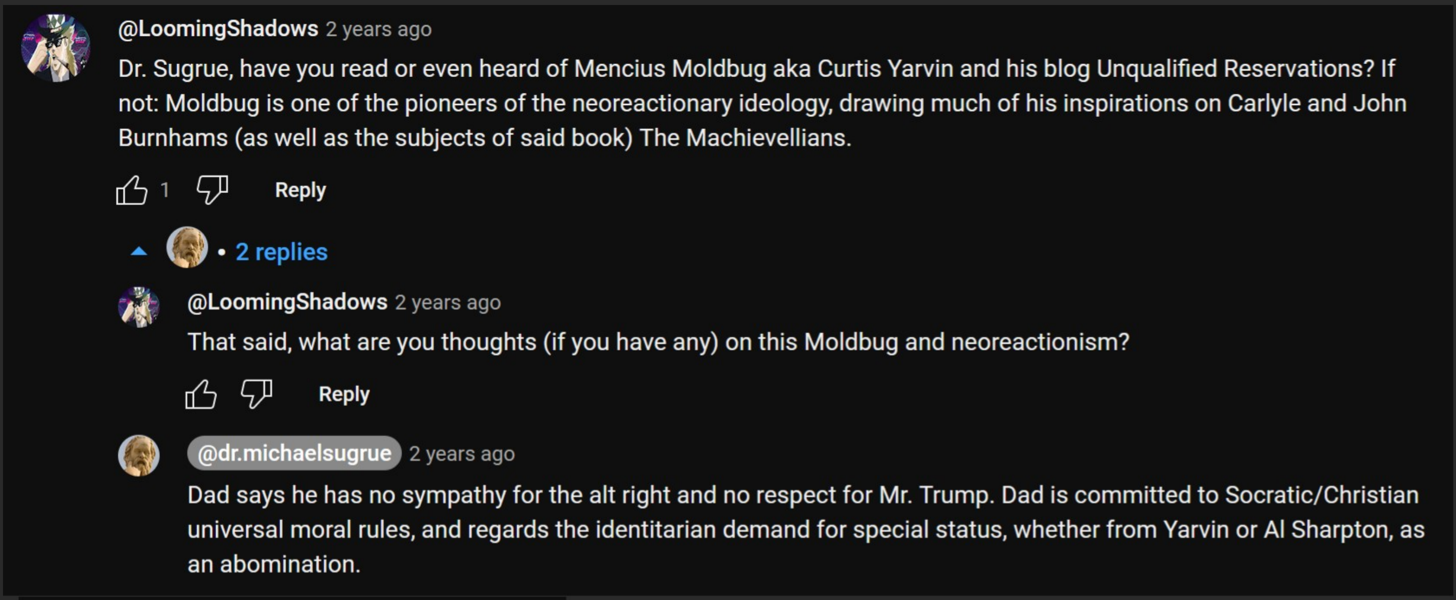
@bulkington3272 2 years ago

Thanks Professor for all of your great lectures! I'm curious if you are surprised by the growth/integration of critical race theory not only in academia but in our society and what is your take on why this has become prevalent?

2

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, "Don't get me started. Divide and conquer. The top 10% or so of American society that call the shots is deeply dysfunctional, myopic and avaricious. CRT and BLM are just the latest iteration of the cynical tradition of American ruling elites getting fat by pitting ill treated white people and ill treated black people against one another fighting for scraps, instead of working together and demanding a place at the table. Like the odious traditions of Jim Crow and lynching, "wokeness" serves the interests of America's ruling class by hiding the fact that inequality is about money, and distracting people with racial or religious or cultural conflict means that income inequality, which has gotten considerably worse as the meritocracy behaved likes pigs at the trough during the last 30 years, will not be addressed."



@LoomingShadows 2 years ago

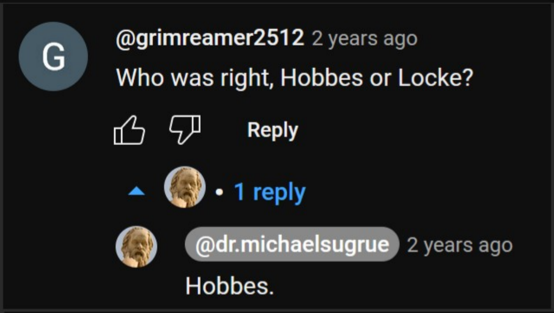
Dr. Sugrue, have you read or even heard of Mencius Moldbug aka Curtis Yarvin and his blog Unqualified Reservations? If not: Moldbug is one of the pioneers of the neoreactionary ideology, drawing much of his inspirations on Carlyle and John Burnhams (as well as the subjects of said book) The Machievellians.

@LoomingShadows 2 years ago

That said, what are you thoughts (if you have any) on this Moldbug and neoreactionism?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says he has no sympathy for the alt right and no respect for Mr. Trump. Dad is committed to Socratic/Christian universal moral rules, and regards the identitarian demand for special status, whether from Yarvin or Al Sharpton, as an abomination.

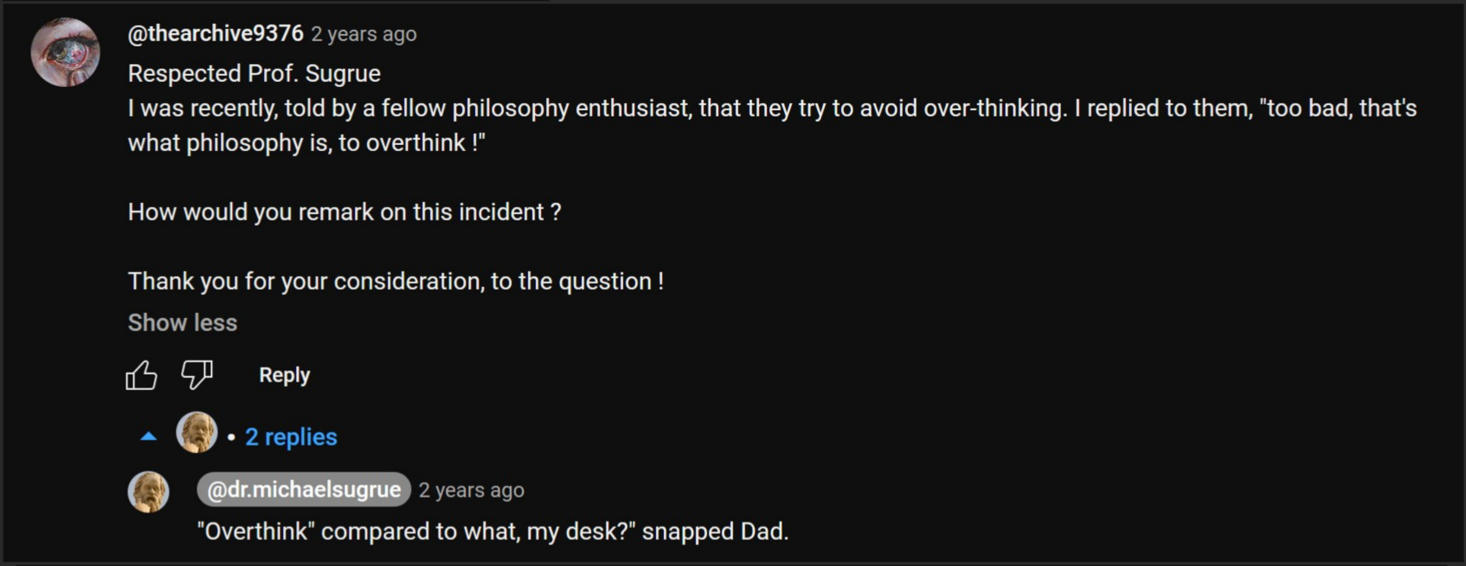


@grimreamer2512 2 years ago

Who was right, Hobbes or Locke?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Hobbes.



@thearchive9376 2 years ago

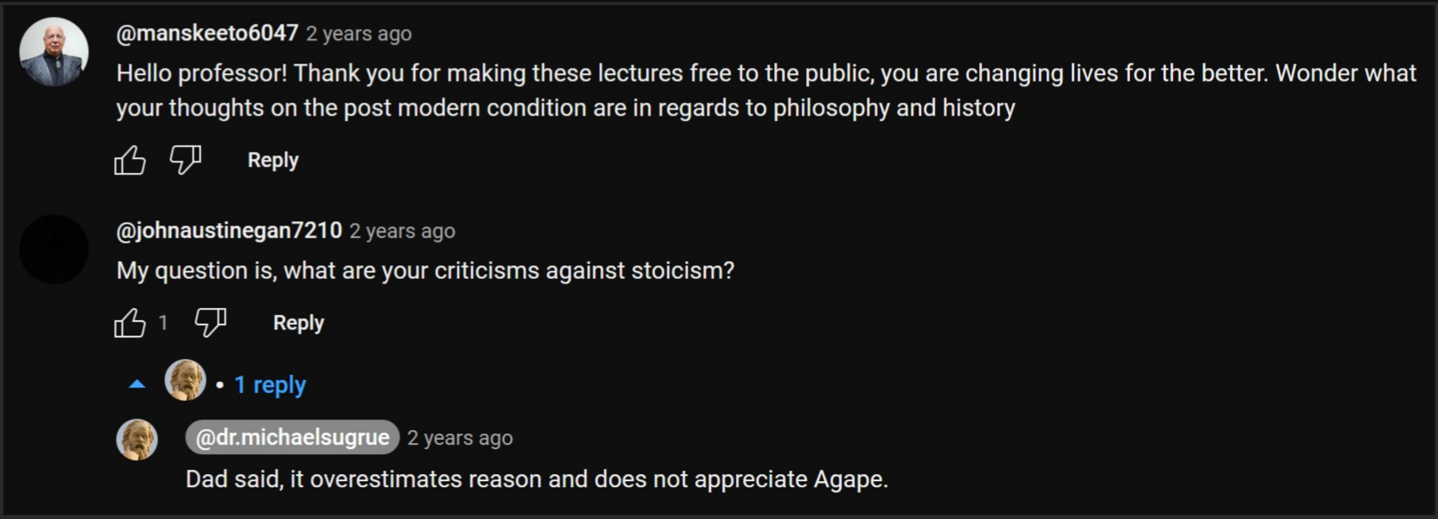
Respected Prof. Sugrue
I was recently, told by a fellow philosophy enthusiast, that they try to avoid over-thinking. I replied to them, "too bad, that's what philosophy is, to overthink !"

How would you remark on this incident ?

Thank you for your consideration, to the question !

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

"Overthink" compared to what, my desk?" snapped Dad.



@manskeeto6047 2 years ago

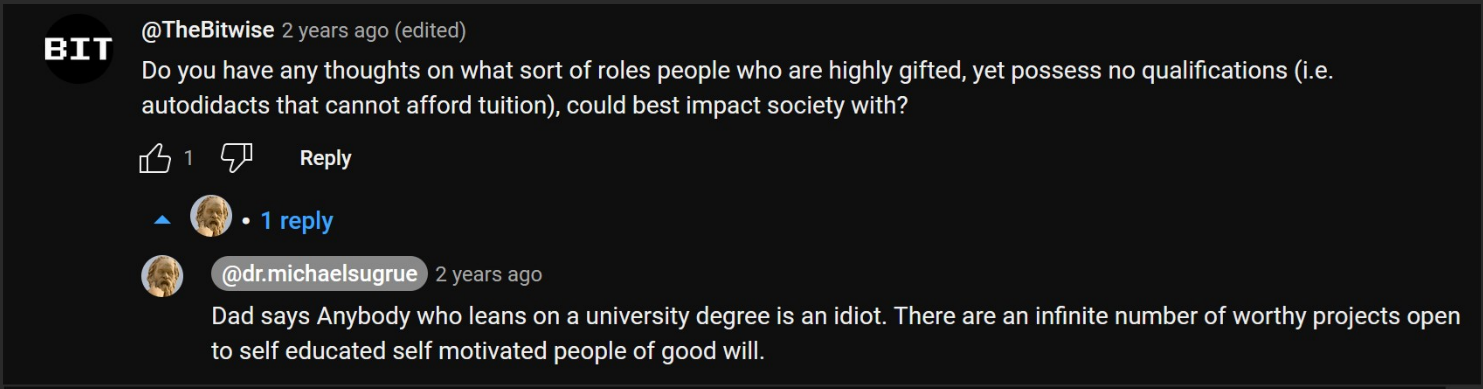
Hello professor! Thank you for making these lectures free to the public, you are changing lives for the better. Wonder what your thoughts on the post modern condition are in regards to philosophy and history

@johnaustinegan7210 2 years ago

My question is, what are your criticisms against stoicism?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, it overestimates reason and does not appreciate Agape.

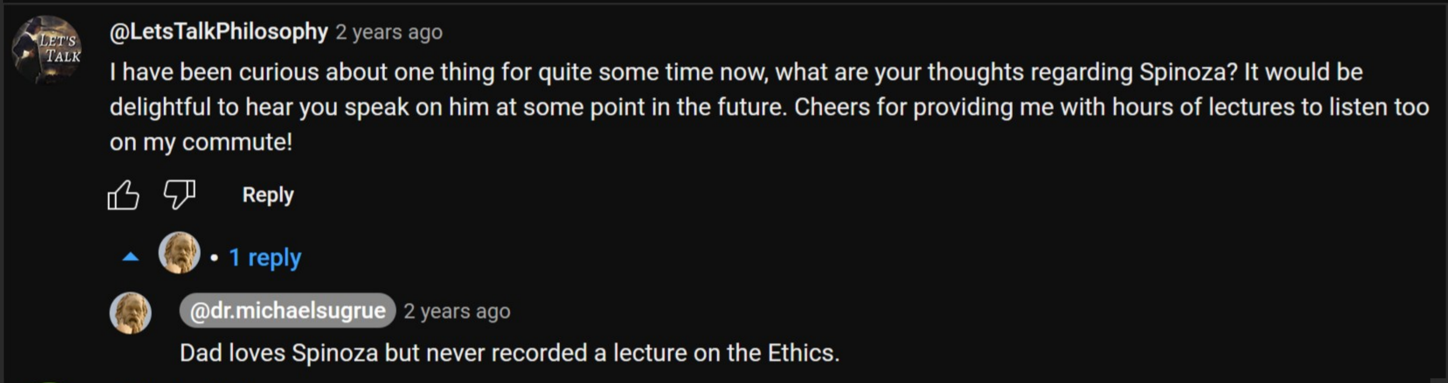


@TheBitwise 2 years ago (edited)

Do you have any thoughts on what sort of roles people who are highly gifted, yet possess no qualifications (i.e. autodidacts that cannot afford tuition), could best impact society with?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says Anybody who leans on a university degree is an idiot. There are an infinite number of worthy projects open to self educated self motivated people of good will.

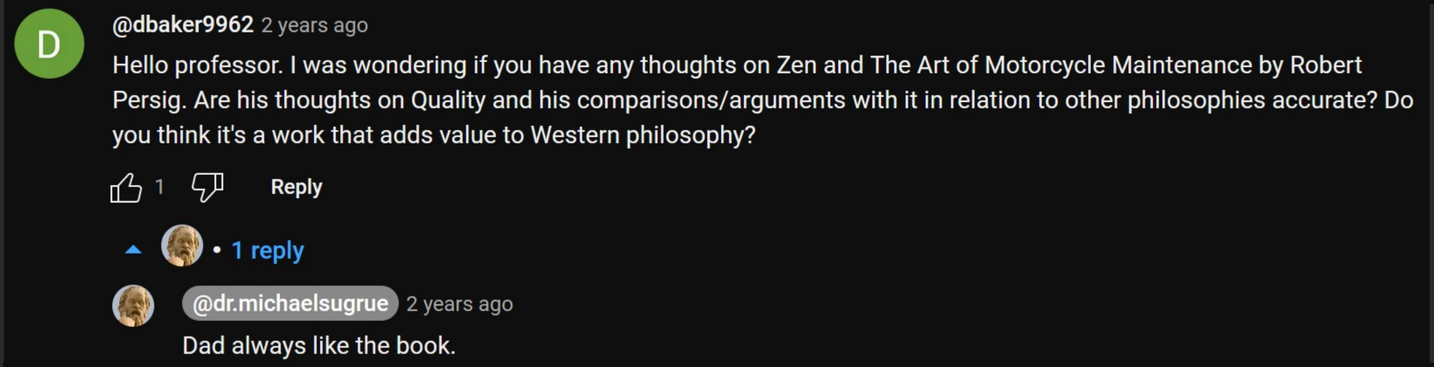


@LetsTalkPhilosophy 2 years ago

I have been curious about one thing for quite some time now, what are your thoughts regarding Spinoza? It would be delightful to hear you speak on him at some point in the future. Cheers for providing me with hours of lectures to listen too on my commute!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad loves Spinoza but never recorded a lecture on the Ethics.

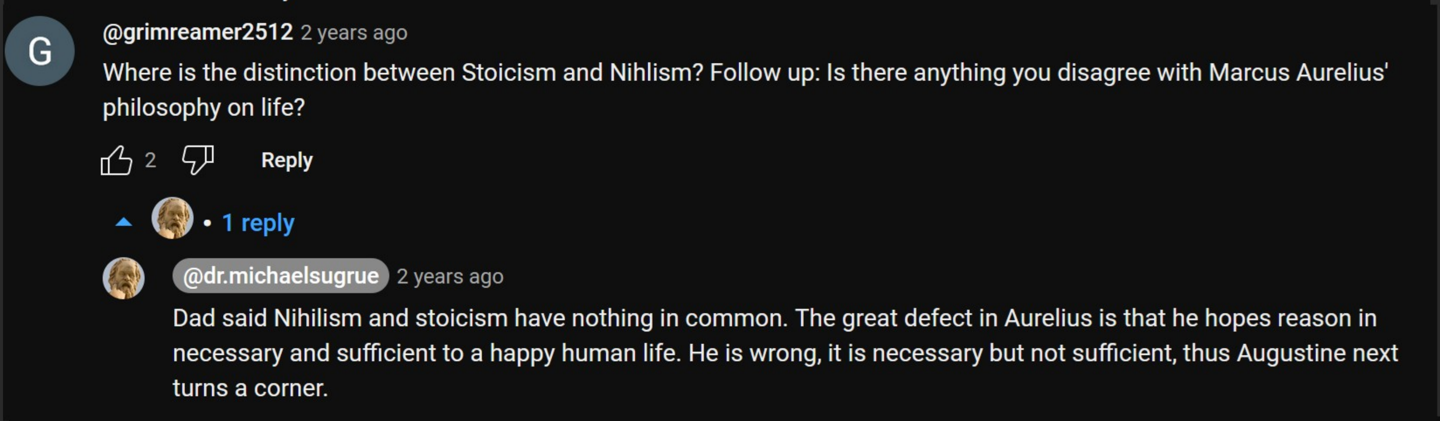


@dbaker9962 2 years ago

Hello professor. I was wondering if you have any thoughts on Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert Persig. Are his thoughts on Quality and his comparisons/arguments with it in relation to other philosophies accurate? Do you think it's a work that adds value to Western philosophy?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad always like the book.

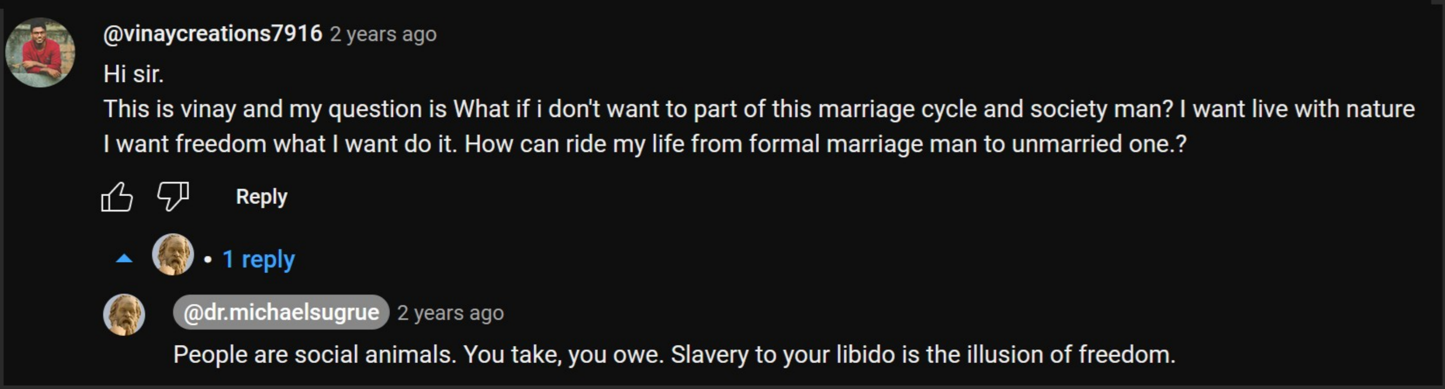


@grimreamer2512 2 years ago

Where is the distinction between Stoicism and Nihlism? Follow up: Is there anything you disagree with Marcus Aurelius' philosophy on life?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said Nihilism and stoicism have nothing in common. The great defect in Aurelius is that he hopes reason in necessary and sufficient to a happy human life. He is wrong, it is necessary but not sufficient, thus Augustine next turns a corner.

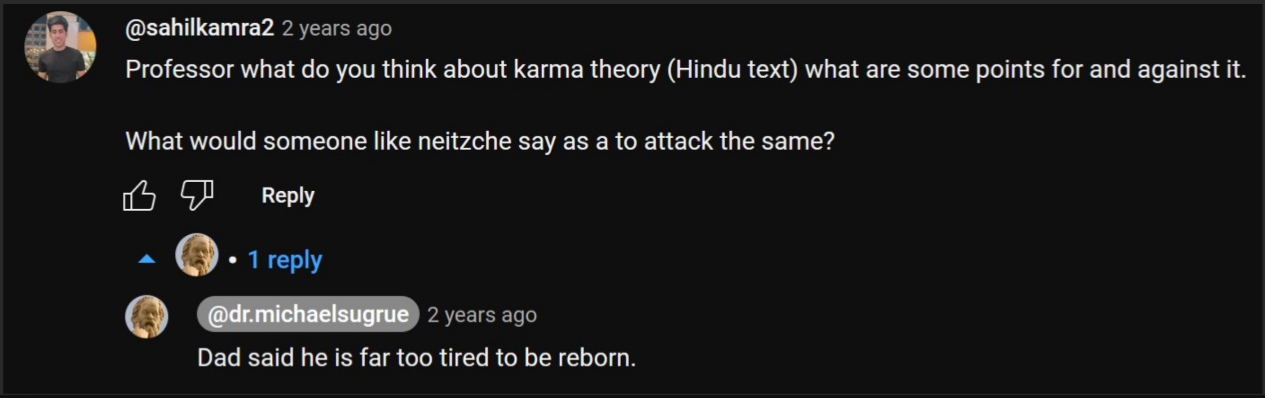


@vinaycreations7916 2 years ago

Hi sir.
This is vinay and my question is What if i don't want to part of this marriage cycle and society man? I want live with nature I want freedom what I want do it. How can ride my life from formal marriage man to unmarried one.?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

People are social animals. You take, you owe. Slavery to your libido is the illusion of freedom.



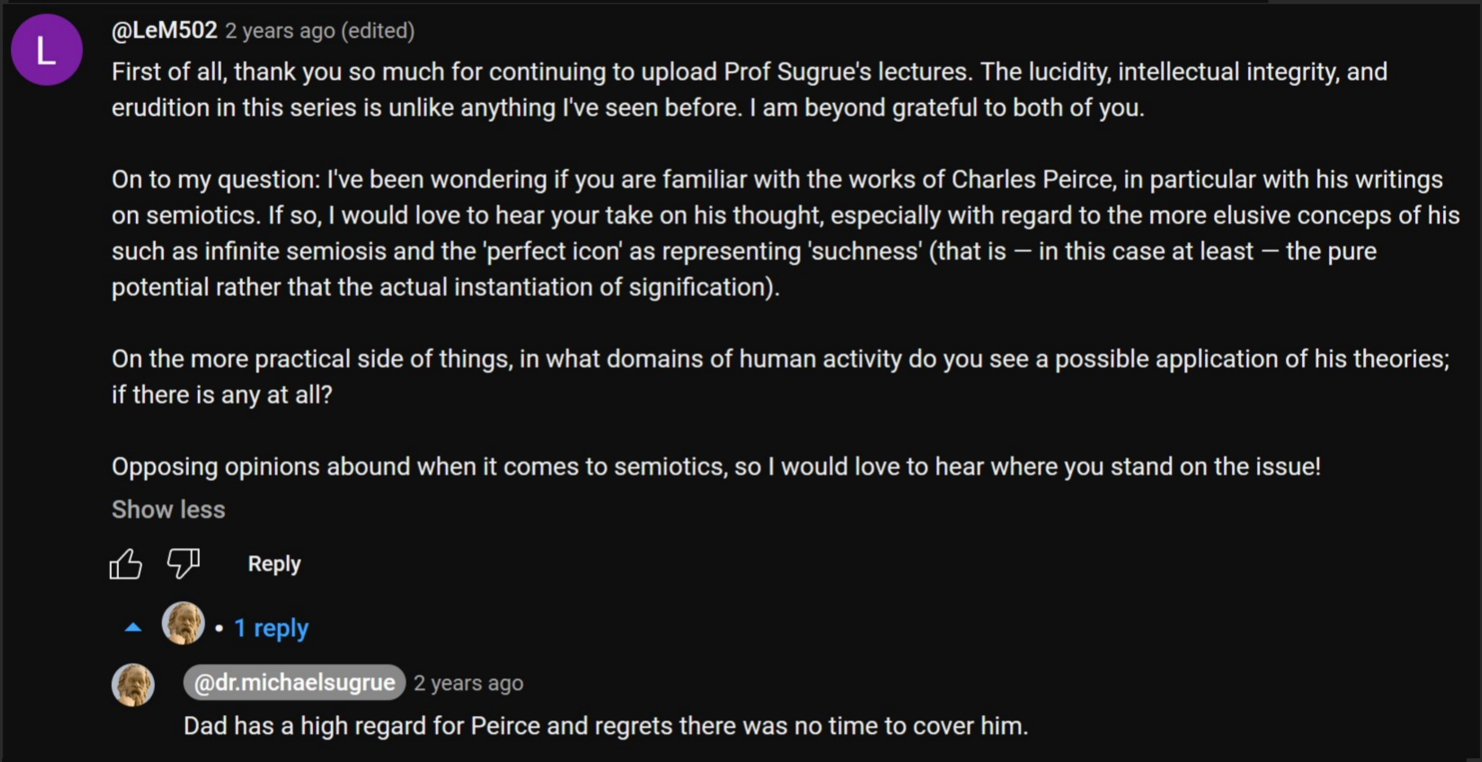
@sahilkamra2 2 years ago

Professor what do you think about karma theory (Hindu text) what are some points for and against it.

What would someone like neitzche say as a to attack the same?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he is far too tired to be reborn.



@LeM502 2 years ago (edited)

First of all, thank you so much for continuing to upload Prof Sugrue's lectures. The lucidity, intellectual integrity, and erudition in this series is unlike anything I've seen before. I am beyond grateful to both of you.

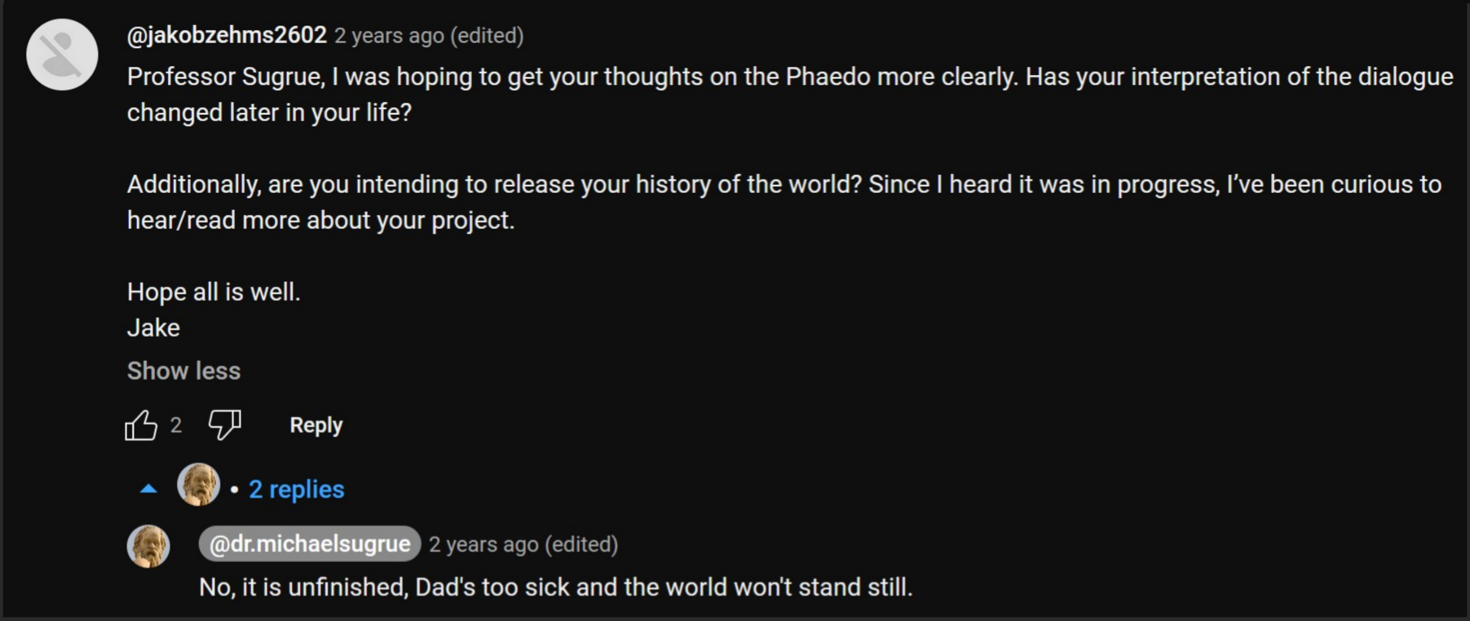
On to my question: I've been wondering if you are familiar with the works of Charles Peirce, in particular with his writings on semiotics. If so, I would love to hear your take on his thought, especially with regard to the more elusive conceps of his such as infinite semiosis and the 'perfect icon' as representing 'suchness' (that is — in this case at least — the pure potential rather that the actual instantiation of signification).

On the more practical side of things, in what domains of human activity do you see a possible application of his theories; if there is any at all?

Opposing opinions abound when it comes to semiotics, so I would love to hear where you stand on the issue!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad has a high regard for Peirce and regrets there was no time to cover him.



@jakobzehms2602 2 years ago (edited)

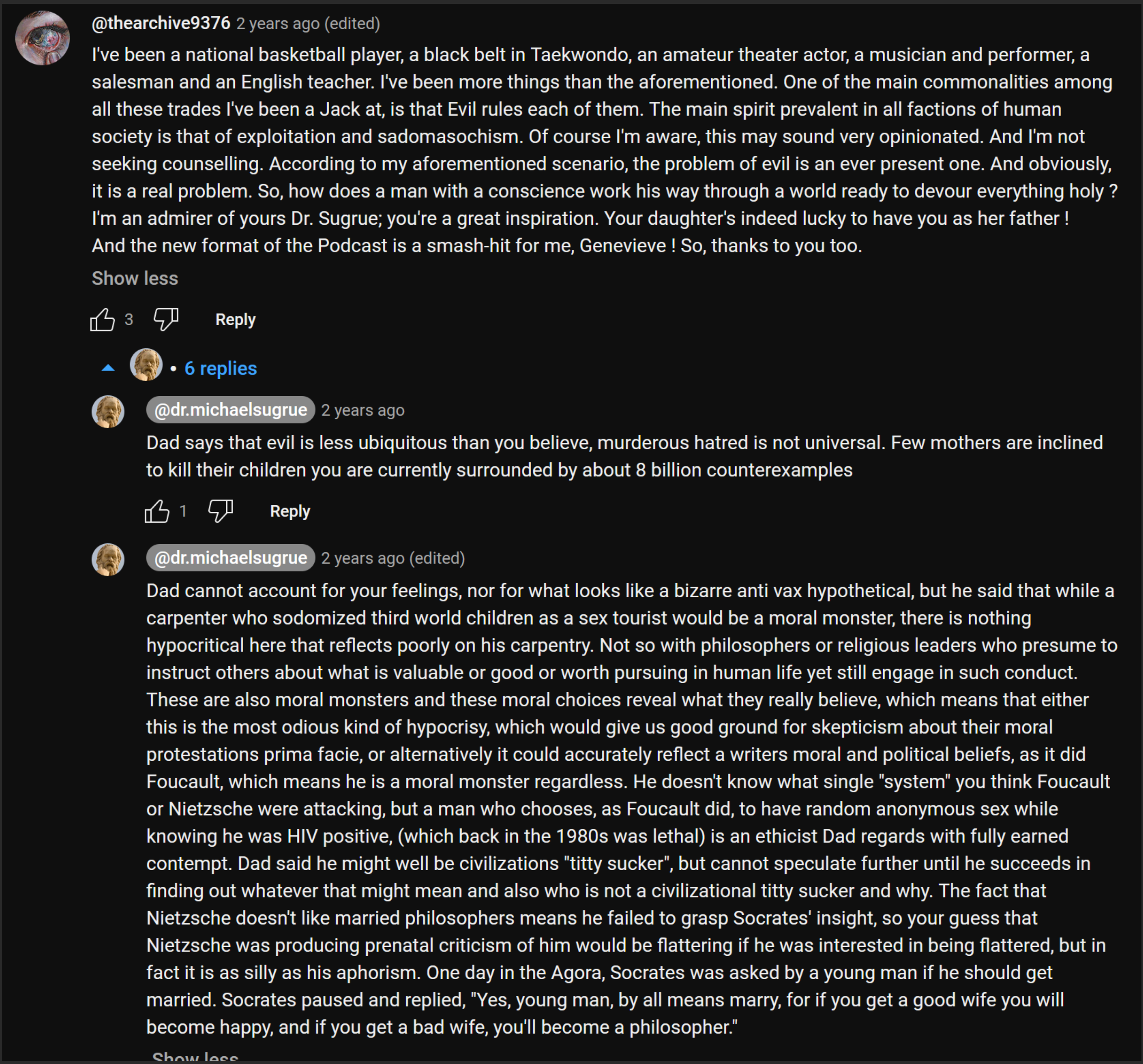
Professor Sugrue, I was hoping to get your thoughts on the Phaedo more clearly. Has your interpretation of the dialogue changed later in your life?

Additionally, are you intending to release your history of the world? Since I heard it was in progress, I've been curious to hear/read more about your project.

Hope all is well.
Jake

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

No, it is unfinished, Dad's too sick and the world won't stand still.



@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

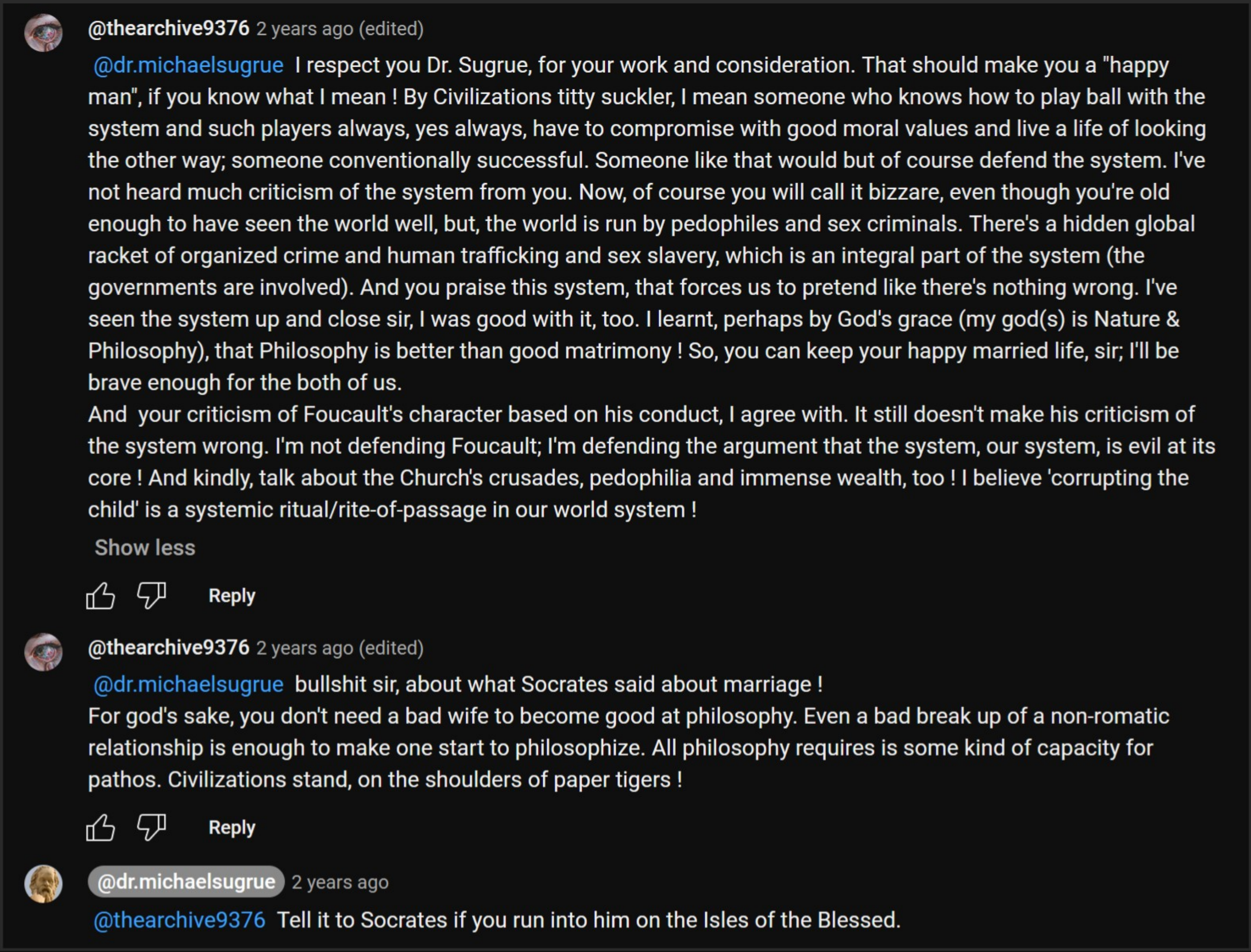
I've been a national basketball player, a black belt in Taekwondo, an amateur theater actor, a musician and performer, a salesman and an English teacher. I've been more things than the aforementioned. One of the main commonalities among all these trades I've been a Jack at, is that Evil rules each of them. The main spirit prevalent in all factions of human society is that of exploitation and sadomasochism. Of course I'm aware, this may sound very opinionated. And I'm not seeking counselling. According to my aforementioned scenario, the problem of evil is an ever present one. And obviously, it is a real problem. So, how does a man with a conscience work his way through a world ready to devour everything holy ?
I'm an admirer of yours Dr. Sugrue; you're a great inspiration. Your daughter's indeed lucky to have you as her father !
And the new format of the Podcast is a smash-hit for me, Genevieve ! So, thanks to you too.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says that evil is less ubiquitous than you believe, murderous hatred is not universal. Few mothers are inclined to kill their children you are currently surrounded by about 8 billion counterexamples

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad cannot account for your feelings, nor for what looks like a bizarre anti vax hypothetical, but he said that while a carpenter who sodomized third world children as a sex tourist would be a moral monster, there is nothing hypocritical here that reflects poorly on his carpentry. Not so with philosophers or religious leaders who presume to instruct others about what is valuable or good or worth pursuing in human life yet still engage in such conduct. These are also moral monsters and these moral choices reveal what they really believe, which means that either this is the most odious kind of hypocrisy, which would give us good ground for skepticism about their moral protestations prima facie, or alternatively it could accurately reflect a writers moral and political beliefs, as it did Foucault, which means he is a moral monster regardless. He doesn't know what single "system" you think Foucault or Nietzsche were attacking, but a man who chooses, as Foucault did, to have random anonymous sex while knowing he was HIV positive, (which back in the 1980s was lethal) is an ethicist Dad regards with fully earned contempt. Dad said he might well be civilizations "titty sucker", but cannot speculate further until he succeeds in finding out whatever that might mean and also who is not a civilizational titty sucker and why. The fact that Nietzsche doesn't like married philosophers means he failed to grasp Socrates' insight, so your guess that Nietzsche was producing prenatal criticism of him would be flattering if he was interested in being flattered, but in fact it is as silly as his aphorism. One day in the Agora, Socrates was asked by a young man if he should get married. Socrates paused and replied, "Yes, young man, by all means marry, for if you get a good wife you will become happy, and if you get a bad wife, you'll become a philosopher."



@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue I respect you Dr. Sugrue, for your work and consideration. That should make you a "happy man", if you know what I mean ! By Civilizations titty suckler, I mean someone who knows how to play ball with the system and such players always, yes always, have to compromise with good moral values and live a life of looking the other way; someone conventionally successful. Someone like that would but of course defend the system. I've not heard much criticism of the system from you. Now, of course you will call it bizzare, even though you're old enough to have seen the world well, but, the world is run by pedophiles and sex criminals. There's a hidden global racket of organized crime and human trafficking and sex slavery, which is an integral part of the system (the governments are involved). And you praise this system, that forces us to pretend like there's nothing wrong. I've seen the system up and close sir, I was good with it, too. I learnt, perhaps by God's grace (my god(s) is Nature & Philosophy), that Philosophy is better than good matrimony ! So, you can keep your happy married life, sir; I'll be brave enough for the both of us.

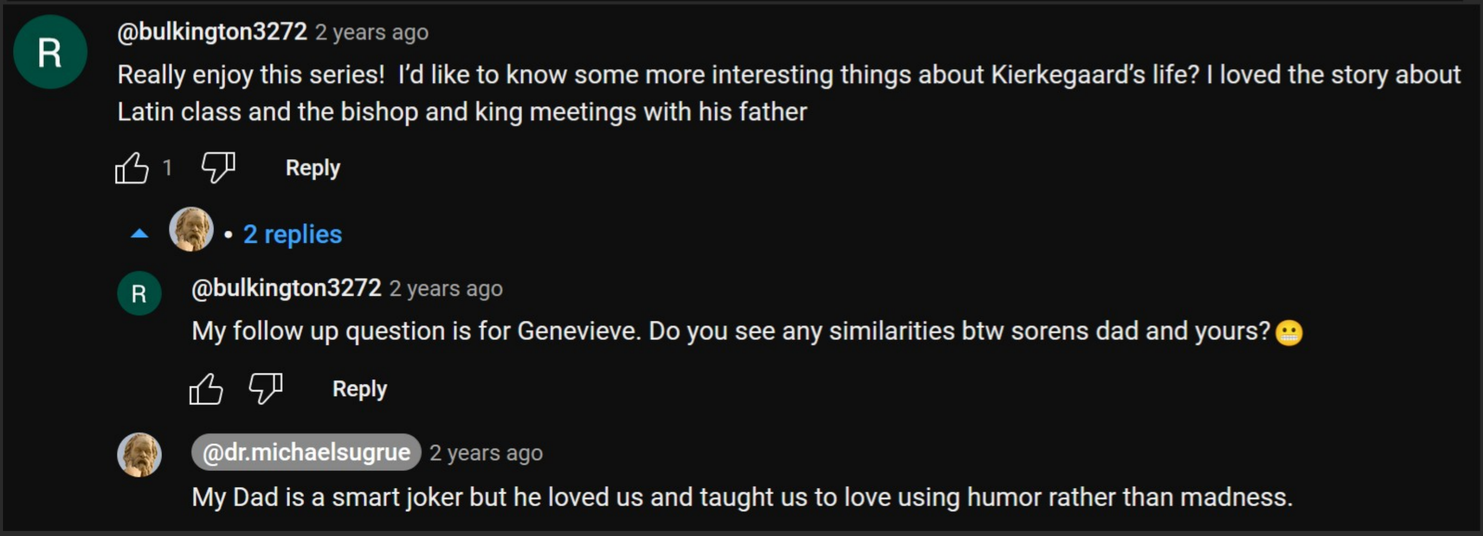
And your criticism of Foucault's character based on his conduct, I agree with. It still doesn't make his criticism of the system wrong. I'm not defending Foucault; I'm defending the argument that the system, our system, is evil at its core ! And kindly, talk about the Church's crusades, pedophilia and immense wealth, too ! I believe 'corrupting the child' is a systemic ritual/rite-of-passage in our world system !

@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue bullshit sir, about what Socrates said about marriage !
For god's sake, you don't need a bad wife to become good at philosophy. Even a bad break up of a non-romatic relationship is enough to make one start to philosophize. All philosophy requires is some kind of capacity for pathos. Civilizations stand, on the shoulders of paper tigers !

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@thearchive9376 Tell it to Socrates if you run into him on the Isles of the Blessed.



@bulkington3272 2 years ago

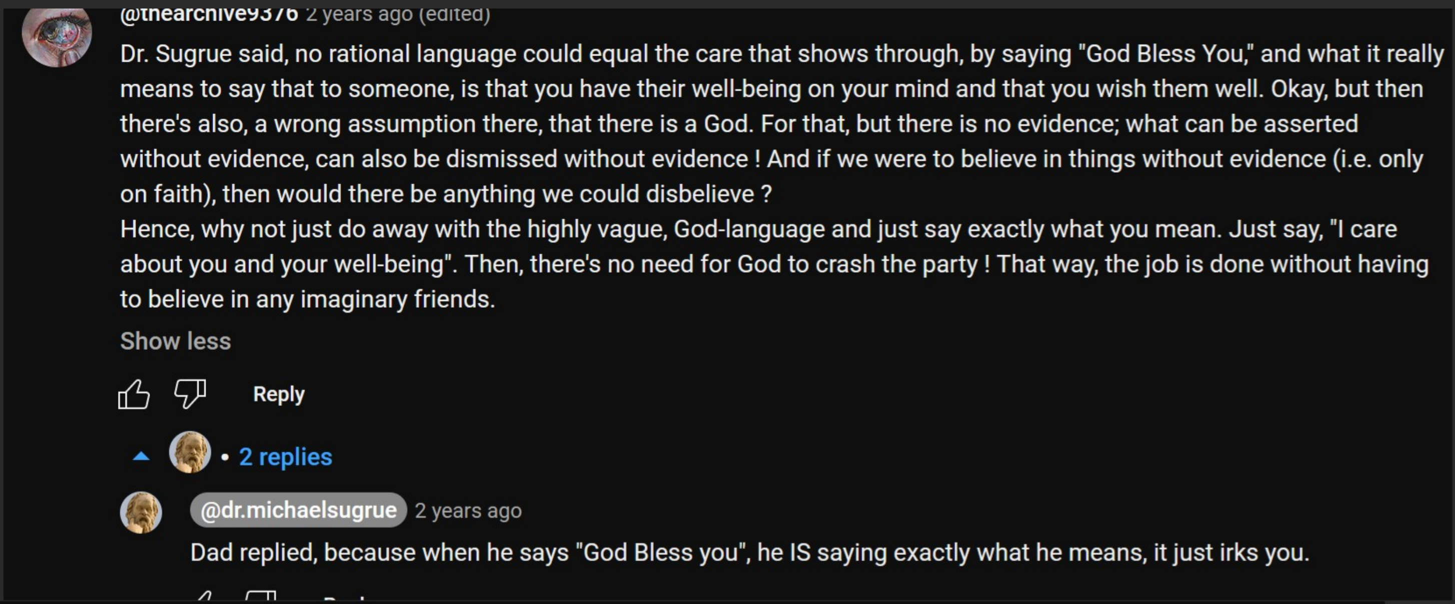
Really enjoy this series! I'd like to know some more interesting things about Kierkegaard's life? I loved the story about Latin class and the bishop and king meetings with his father

@bulkington3272 2 years ago

My follow up question is for Genevieve. Do you see any similarities btw sorens dad and yours? 😬

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

My Dad is a smart joker but he loved us and taught us to love using humor rather than madness.

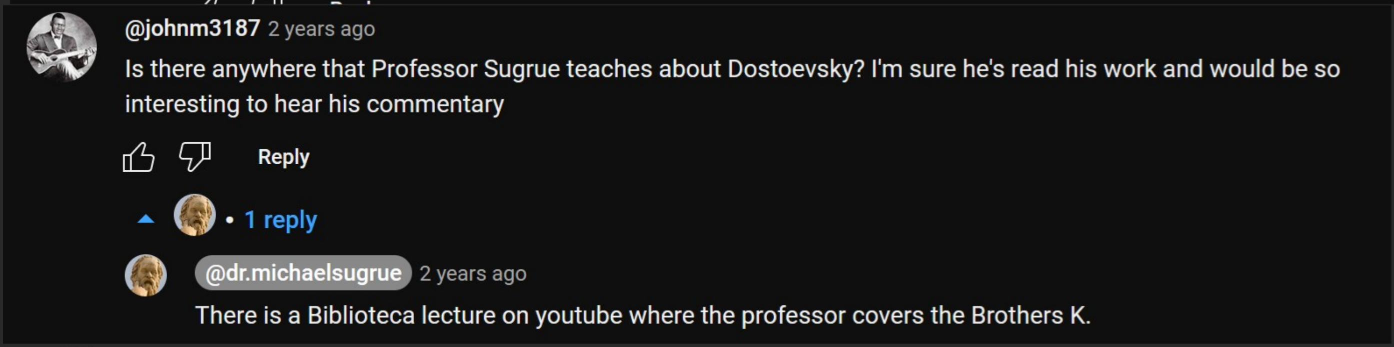


@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

Dr. Sugrue said, no rational language could equal the care that shows through, by saying "God Bless You," and what it really means to say that to someone, is that you have their well-being on your mind and that you wish them well. Okay, but then there's also, a wrong assumption there, that there is a God. For that, but there is no evidence; what can be asserted without evidence, can also be dismissed without evidence ! And if we were to believe in things without evidence (i.e. only on faith), then would there be anything we could disbelieve ?
Hence, why not just do away with the highly vague, God-language and just say exactly what you mean. Just say, "I care about you and your well-being". Then, there's no need for God to crash the party ! That way, the job is done without having to believe in any imaginary friends.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad replied, because when he says "God Bless you", he IS saying exactly what he means, it just irks you.

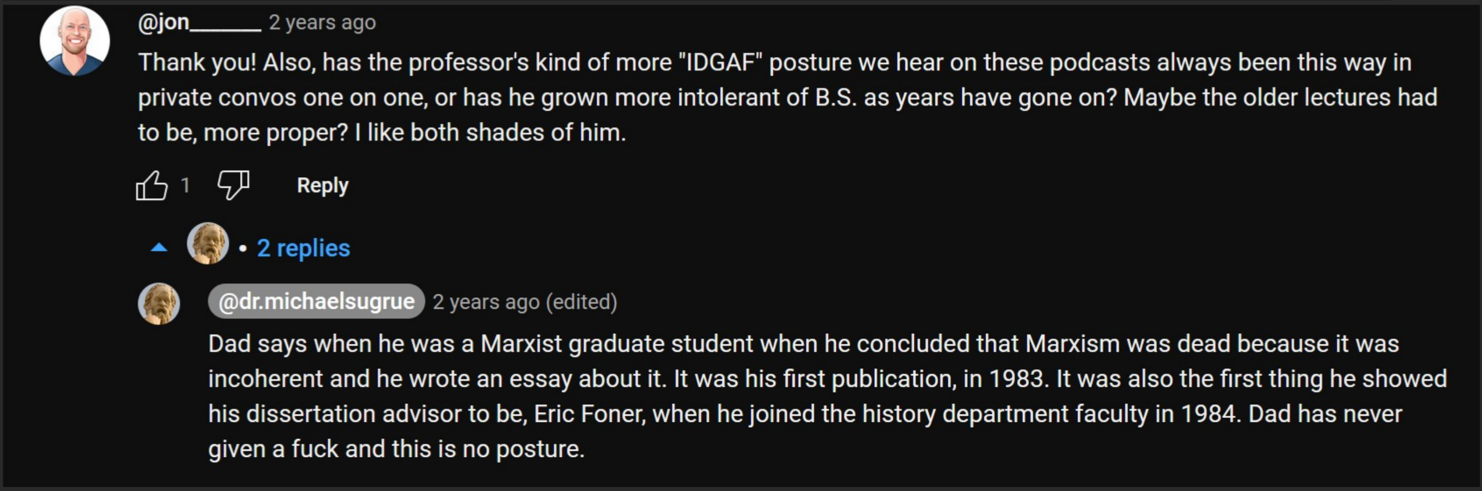


@johnm3187 2 years ago

Is there anywhere that Professor Sugrue teaches about Dostoevsky? I'm sure he's read his work and would be so interesting to hear his commentary

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

There is a Biblioteca lecture on youtube where the professor covers the Brothers K.

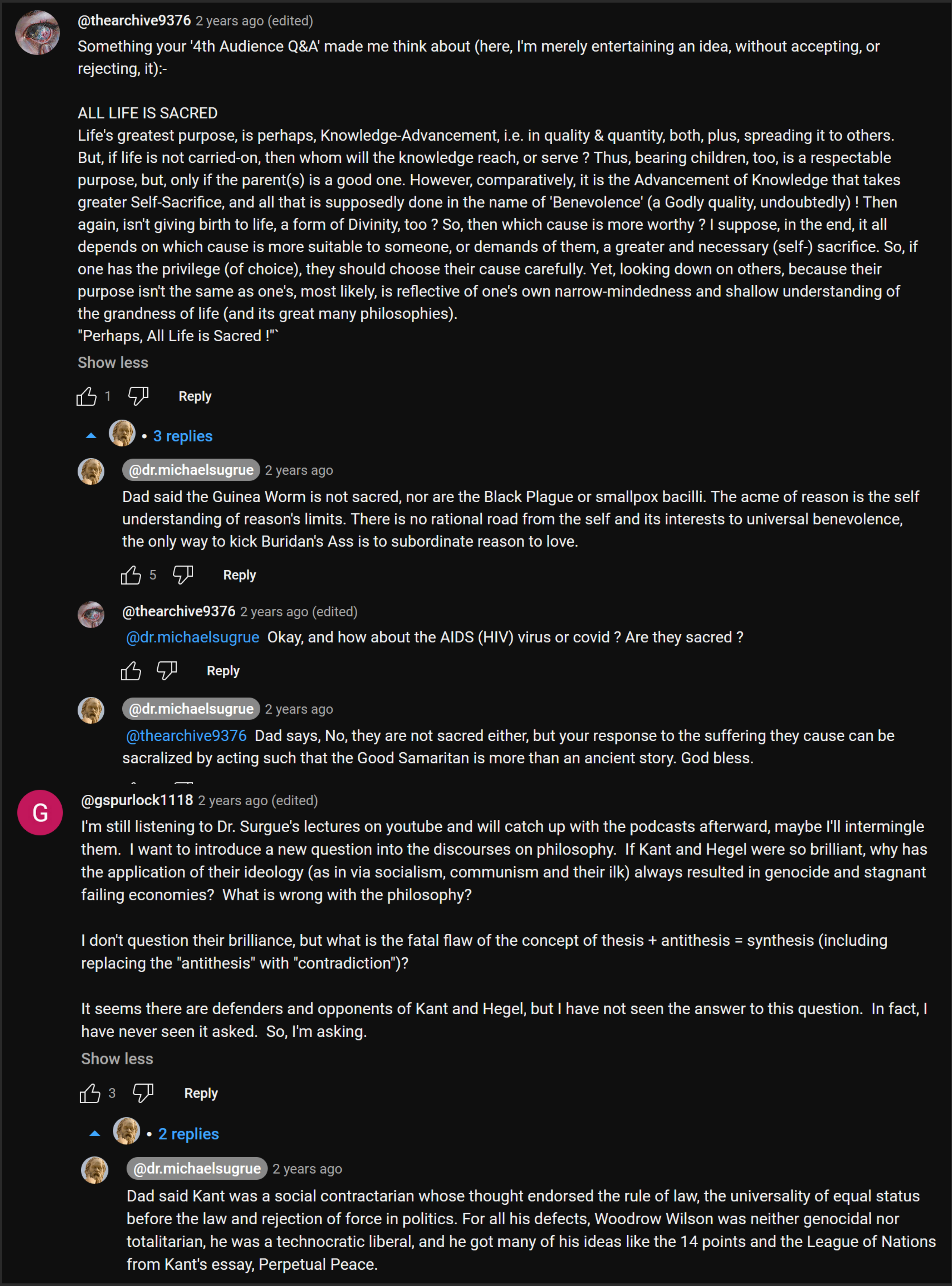


@jon______ 2 years ago

Thank you! Also, has the professor's kind of more "IDGAF" posture we hear on these podcasts always been this way in private convos one on one, or has he grown more intolerant of B.S. as years have gone on? Maybe the older lectures had to be, more proper? I like both shades of him.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad says when he was a Marxist graduate student when he concluded that Marxism was dead because it was incoherent and he wrote an essay about it. It was his first publication, in 1983. It was also the first thing he showed his dissertation advisor to be, Eric Foner, when he joined the history department faculty in 1984. Dad has never given a fuck and this is no posture.



@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

Something your '4th Audience Q&A' made me think about (here, I'm merely entertaining an idea, without accepting, or rejecting, it):-

ALL LIFE IS SACRED
Life's greatest purpose, is perhaps, Knowledge-Advancement, i.e. in quality & quantity, both, plus, spreading it to others. But, if life is not carried-on, then whom will the knowledge reach, or serve ? Thus, bearing children, too, is a respectable purpose, but, only if the parent(s) is a good one. However, comparatively, it is the Advancement of Knowledge that takes greater Self-Sacrifice, and all that is supposedly done in the name of 'Benevolence' (a Godly quality, undoubtedly) ! Then again, isn't giving birth to life, a form of Divinity, too ? So, then which cause is more worthy ? I suppose, in the end, it all depends on which cause is more suitable to someone, or demands of them, a greater and necessary (self-) sacrifice. So, if one has the privilege (of choice), they should choose their cause carefully. Yet, looking down on others, because their purpose isn't the same as one's, most likely, is reflective of one's own narrow-mindedness and shallow understanding of the grandness of life (and its great many philosophies).
"Perhaps, All Life is Sacred !"`

Show less

1 Reply

3 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said the Guinea Worm is not sacred, nor are the Black Plague or smallpox bacilli. The acme of reason is the self understanding of reason's limits. There is no rational road from the self and its interests to universal benevolence, the only way to kick Buridan's Ass is to subordinate reason to love.

5 Reply

@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue Okay, and how about the AIDS (HIV) virus or covid ? Are they sacred ?

Reply

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@thearchive9376 Dad says, No, they are not sacred either, but your response to the suffering they cause can be sacralized by acting such that the Good Samaritan is more than an ancient story. God bless.

@gspurlock1118 2 years ago (edited)

I'm still listening to Dr. Surgue's lectures on youtube and will catch up with the podcasts afterward, maybe I'll intermingle them. I want to introduce a new question into the discourses on philosophy. If Kant and Hegel were so brilliant, why has the application of their ideology (as in via socialism, communism and their ilk) always resulted in genocide and stagnant failing economies? What is wrong with the philosophy?

I don't question their brilliance, but what is the fatal flaw of the concept of thesis + antithesis = synthesis (including replacing the "antithesis" with "contradiction")?

It seems there are defenders and opponents of Kant and Hegel, but I have not seen the answer to this question. In fact, I have never seen it asked. So, I'm asking.

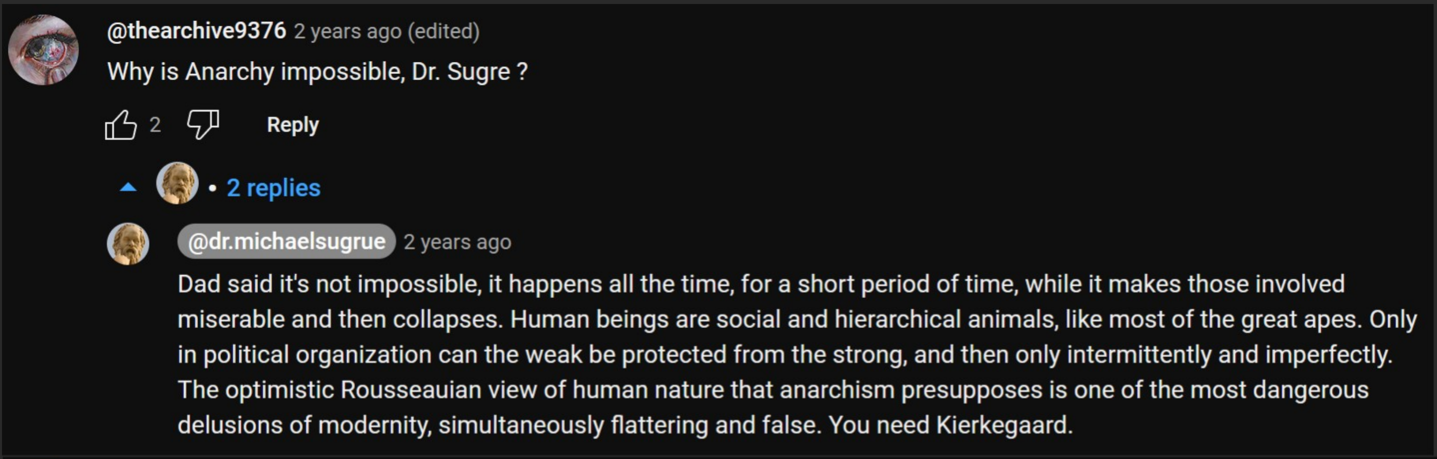
Show less

3 Reply

2 replies

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said Kant was a social contractarian whose thought endorsed the rule of law, the universality of equal status before the law and rejection of force in politics. For all his defects, Woodrow Wilson was neither genocidal nor totalitarian, he was a technocratic liberal, and he got many of his ideas like the 14 points and the League of Nations from Kant's essay, Perpetual Peace.

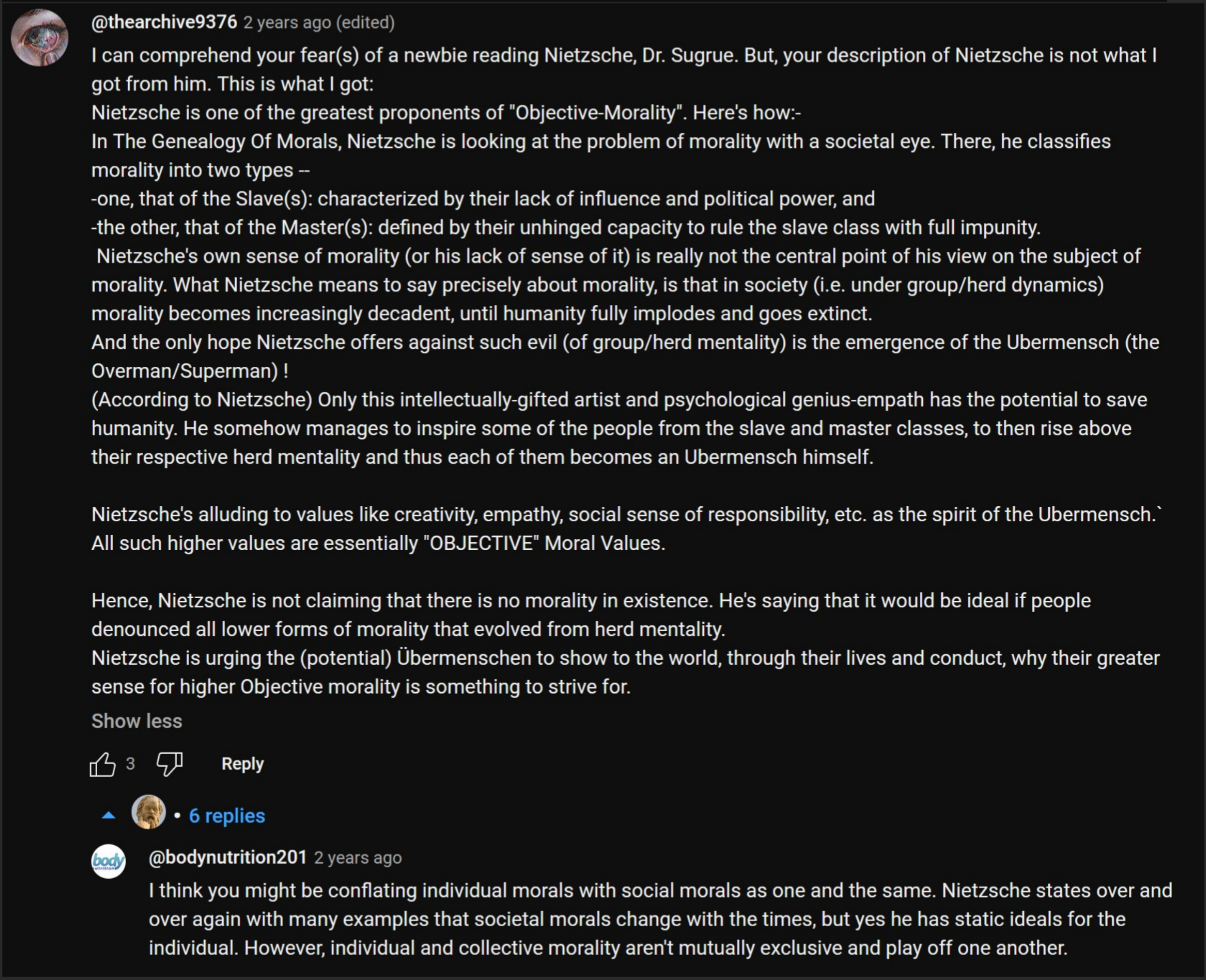


@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

Why is Anarchy impossible, Dr. Sugre ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said it's not impossible, it happens all the time, for a short period of time, while it makes those involved miserable and then collapses. Human beings are social and hierarchical animals, like most of the great apes. Only in political organization can the weak be protected from the strong, and then only intermittently and imperfectly. The optimistic Rousseauian view of human nature that anarchism presupposes is one of the most dangerous delusions of modernity, simultaneously flattering and false. You need Kierkegaard.



@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

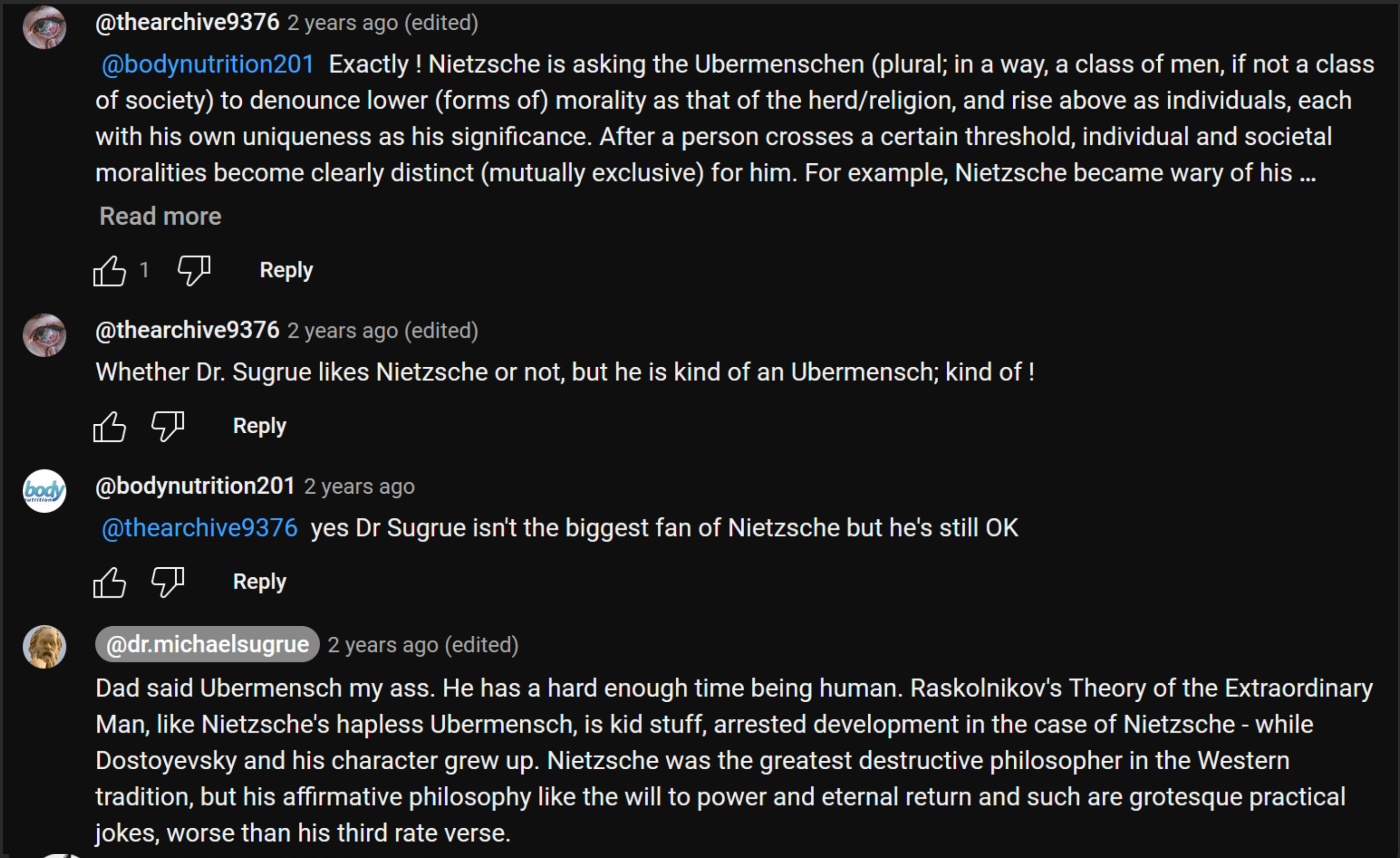
I can comprehend your fear(s) of a newbie reading Nietzsche, Dr. Sugrue. But, your description of Nietzsche is not what I got from him. This is what I got:
Nietzsche is one of the greatest proponents of "Objective-Morality". Here's how:-
In The Genealogy Of Morals, Nietzsche is looking at the problem of morality with a societal eye. There, he classifies morality into two types --
-one, that of the Slave(s): characterized by their lack of influence and political power, and
-the other, that of the Master(s): defined by their unhinged capacity to rule the slave class with full impunity.
Nietzsche's own sense of morality (or his lack of sense of it) is really not the central point of his view on the subject of morality. What Nietzsche means to say precisely about morality, is that in society (i.e. under group/herd dynamics) morality becomes increasingly decadent, until humanity fully implodes and goes extinct.
And the only hope Nietzsche offers against such evil (of group/herd mentality) is the emergence of the Ubermensch (the Overman/Superman) !
(According to Nietzsche) Only this intellectually-gifted artist and psychological genius-empath has the potential to save humanity. He somehow manages to inspire some of the people from the slave and master classes, to then rise above their respective herd mentality and thus each of them becomes an Ubermensch himself.

Nietzsche's alluding to values like creativity, empathy, social sense of responsibility, etc. as the spirit of the Ubermensch.`
All such higher values are essentially "OBJECTIVE" Moral Values.

Hence, Nietzsche is not claiming that there is no morality in existence. He's saying that it would be ideal if people denounced all lower forms of morality that evolved from herd mentality.
Nietzsche is urging the (potential) Übermenschen to show to the world, through their lives and conduct, why their greater sense for higher Objective morality is something to strive for.

@bodynutrition201 2 years ago

I think you might be conflating individual morals with social morals as one and the same. Nietzsche states over and over again with many examples that societal morals change with the times, but yes he has static ideals for the individual. However, individual and collective morality aren't mutually exclusive and play off one another.



@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

@bodynutrition201 Exactly ! Nietzsche is asking the Ubermenschen (plural; in a way, a class of men, if not a class of society) to denounce lower (forms of) morality as that of the herd/religion, and rise above as individuals, each with his own uniqueness as his significance. After a person crosses a certain threshold, individual and societal moralities become clearly distinct (mutually exclusive) for him. For example, Nietzsche became wary of his ...

@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

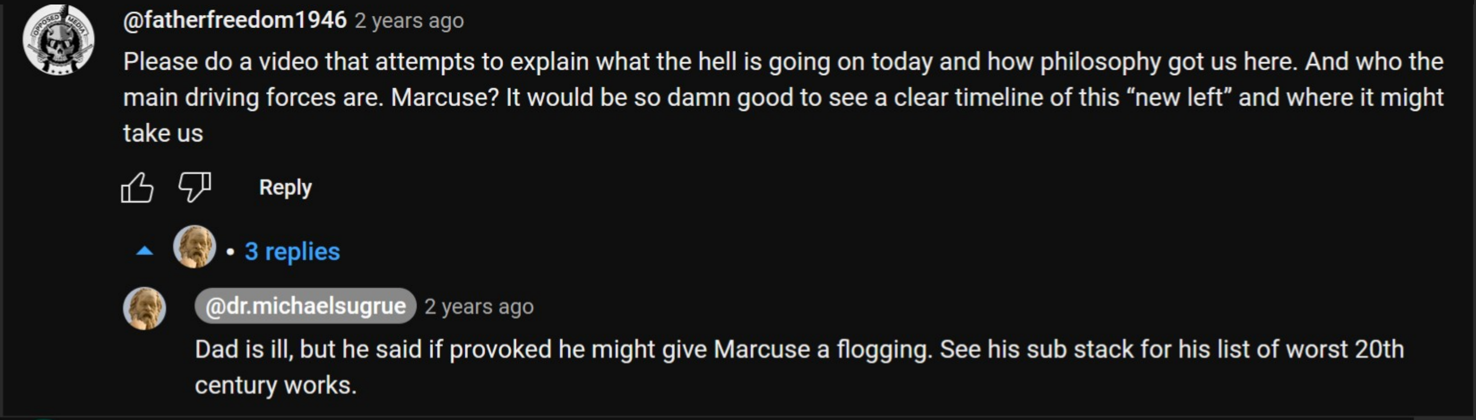
Whether Dr. Sugrue likes Nietzsche or not, but he is kind of an Ubermensch; kind of !

@bodynutrition201 2 years ago

@thearchive9376 yes Dr Sugrue isn't the biggest fan of Nietzsche but he's still OK

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said Ubermensch my ass. He has a hard enough time being human. Raskolnikov's Theory of the Extraordinary Man, like Nietzsche's hapless Ubermensch, is kid stuff, arrested development in the case of Nietzsche - while Dostoyevsky and his character grew up. Nietzsche was the greatest destructive philosopher in the Western tradition, but his affirmative philosophy like the will to power and eternal return and such are grotesque practical jokes, worse than his third rate verse.

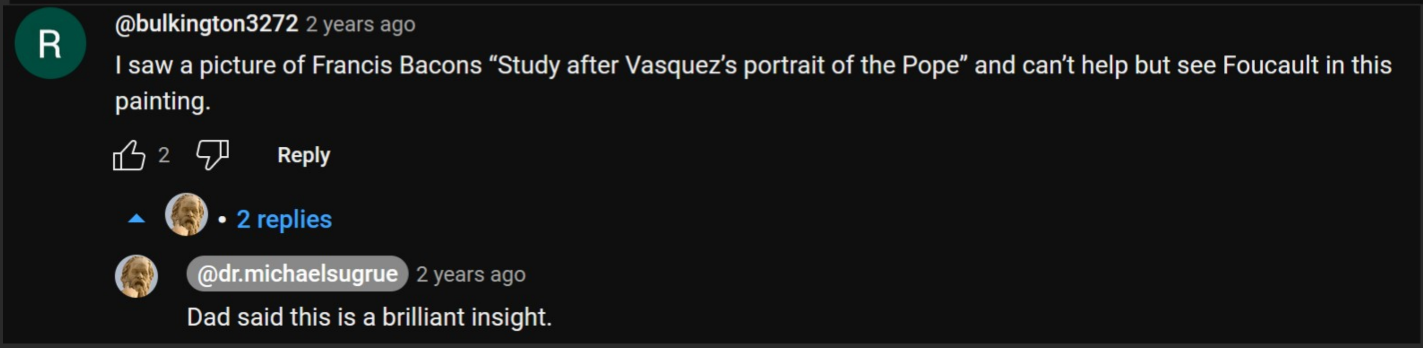


@fatherfreedom1946 2 years ago

Please do a video that attempts to explain what the hell is going on today and how philosophy got us here. And who the main driving forces are. Marcuse? It would be so damn good to see a clear timeline of this “new left” and where it might take us

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad is ill, but he said if provoked he might give Marcuse a flogging. See his sub stack for his list of worst 20th century works.

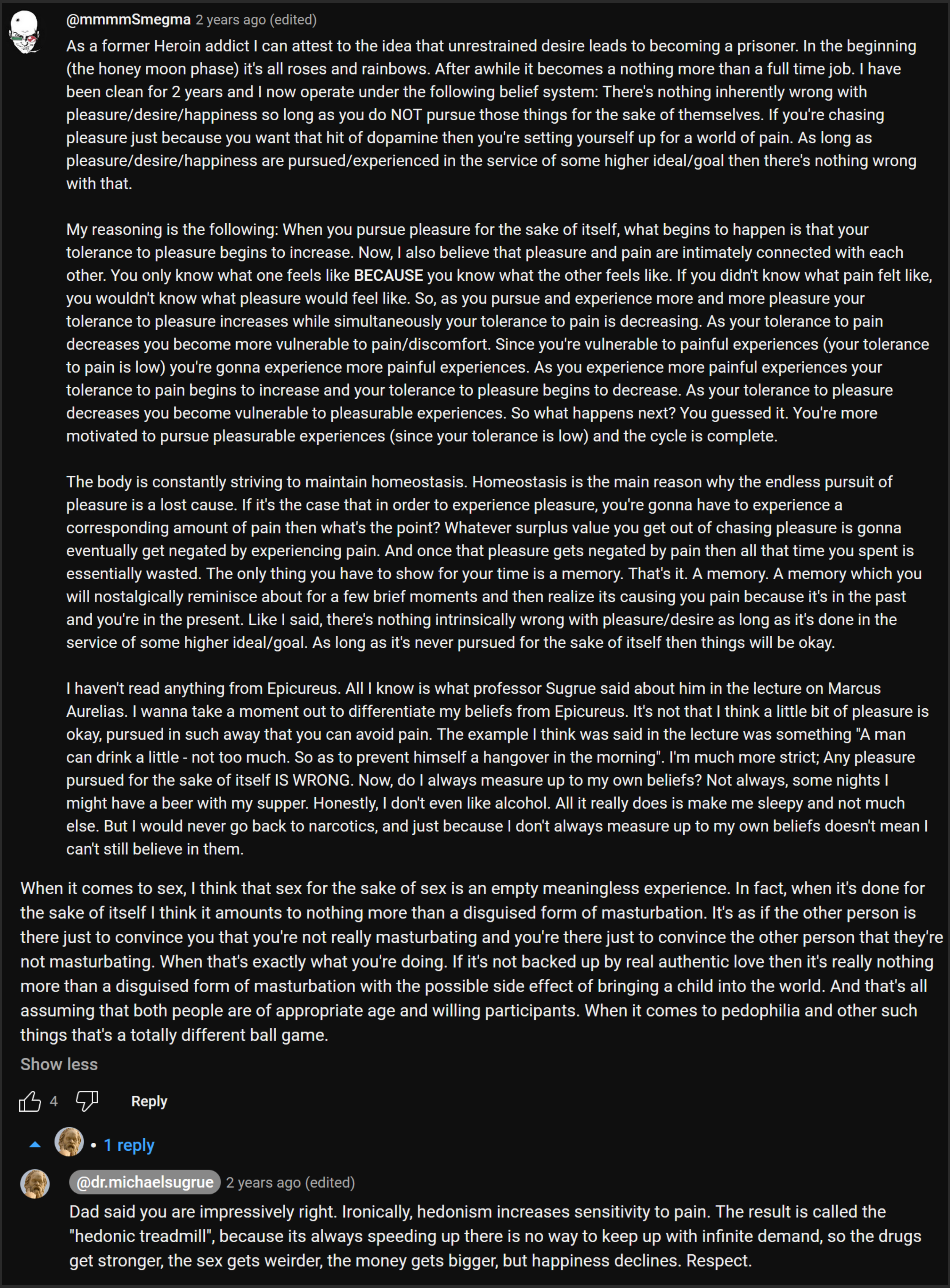


@bulkington3272 2 years ago

I saw a picture of Francis Bacons “Study after Vasquez’s portrait of the Pope” and can’t help but see Foucault in this painting.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said this is a brilliant insight.



@mmmmSmegma 2 years ago (edited)

As a former Heroin addict I can attest to the idea that unrestrained desire leads to becoming a prisoner. In the beginning (the honey moon phase) it's all roses and rainbows. After awhile it becomes a nothing more than a full time job. I have been clean for 2 years and I now operate under the following belief system: There's nothing inherently wrong with pleasure/desire/happiness so long as you do NOT pursue those things for the sake of themselves. If you're chasing pleasure just because you want that hit of dopamine then you're setting yourself up for a world of pain. As long as pleasure/desire/happiness are pursued/experienced in the service of some higher ideal/goal then there's nothing wrong with that.

My reasoning is the following: When you pursue pleasure for the sake of itself, what begins to happen is that your tolerance to pleasure begins to increase. Now, I also believe that pleasure and pain are intimately connected with each other. You only know what one feels like **BECAUSE** you know what the other feels like. If you didn't know what pain felt like, you wouldn't know what pleasure would feel like. So, as you pursue and experience more and more pleasure your tolerance to pleasure increases while simultaneously your tolerance to pain is decreasing. As your tolerance to pain decreases you become more vulnerable to pain/discomfort. Since you're vulnerable to painful experiences (your tolerance to pain is low) you're gonna experience more painful experiences. As you experience more painful experiences your tolerance to pain begins to increase and your tolerance to pleasure begins to decrease. As your tolerance to pleasure decreases you become vulnerable to pleasurable experiences. So what happens next? You guessed it. You're more motivated to pursue pleasurable experiences (since your tolerance is low) and the cycle is complete.

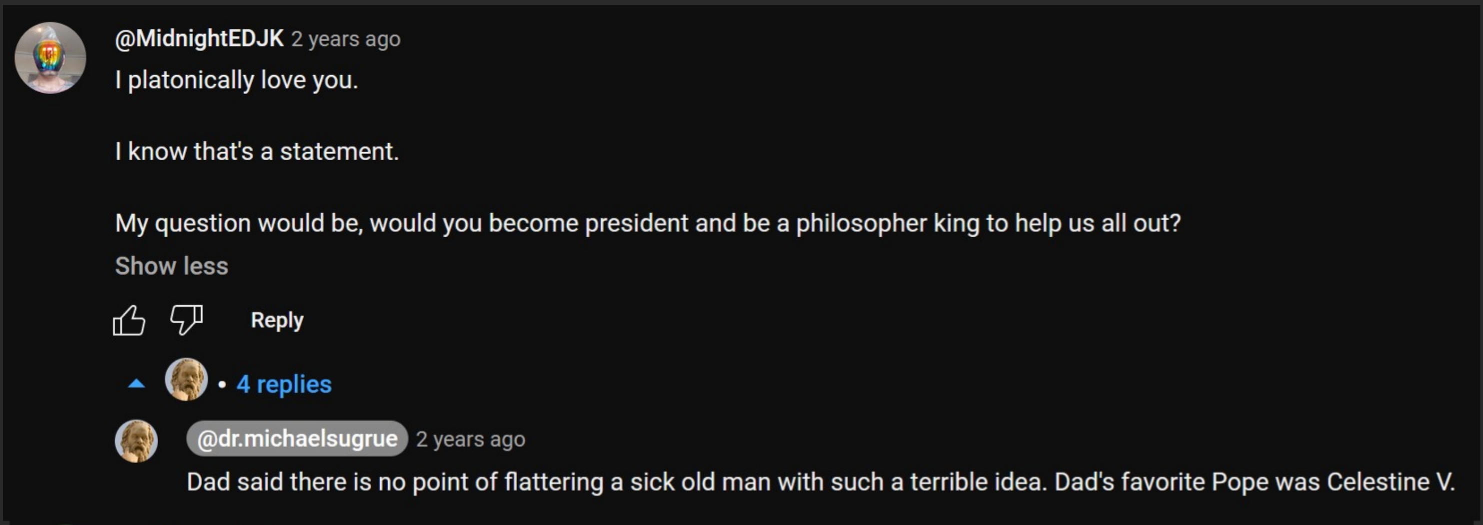
The body is constantly striving to maintain homeostasis. Homeostasis is the main reason why the endless pursuit of pleasure is a lost cause. If it's the case that in order to experience pleasure, you're gonna have to experience a corresponding amount of pain then what's the point? Whatever surplus value you get out of chasing pleasure is gonna eventually get negated by experiencing pain. And once that pleasure gets negated by pain then all that time you spent is essentially wasted. The only thing you have to show for your time is a memory. That's it. A memory. A memory which you will nostalgically reminisce about for a few brief moments and then realize its causing you pain because it's in the past and you're in the present. Like I said, there's nothing intrinsically wrong with pleasure/desire as long as it's done in the service of some higher ideal/goal. As long as it's never pursued for the sake of itself then things will be okay.

I haven't read anything from Epicureus. All I know is what professor Sugrue said about him in the lecture on Marcus Aurelias. I wanna take a moment out to differentiate my beliefs from Epicureus. It's not that I think a little bit of pleasure is okay, pursued in such away that you can avoid pain. The example I think was said in the lecture was something "A man can drink a little - not too much. So as to prevent himself a hangover in the morning". I'm much more strict; Any pleasure pursued for the sake of itself IS WRONG. Now, do I always measure up to my own beliefs? Not always, some nights I might have a beer with my supper. Honestly, I don't even like alcohol. All it really does is make me sleepy and not much else. But I would never go back to narcotics, and just because I don't always measure up to my own beliefs doesn't mean I can't still believe in them.

When it comes to sex, I think that sex for the sake of sex is an empty meaningless experience. In fact, when it's done for the sake of itself I think it amounts to nothing more than a disguised form of masturbation. It's as if the other person is there just to convince you that you're not really masturbating and you're there just to convince the other person that they're not masturbating. When that's exactly what you're doing. If it's not backed up by real authentic love then it's really nothing more than a disguised form of masturbation with the possible side effect of bringing a child into the world. And that's all assuming that both people are of appropriate age and willing participants. When it comes to pedophilia and other such things that's a totally different ball game.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said you are impressively right. Ironically, hedonism increases sensitivity to pain. The result is called the "hedonic treadmill", because its always speeding up there is no way to keep up with infinite demand, so the drugs get stronger, the sex gets weirder, the money gets bigger, but happiness declines. Respect.



@MidnightEDJK 2 years ago

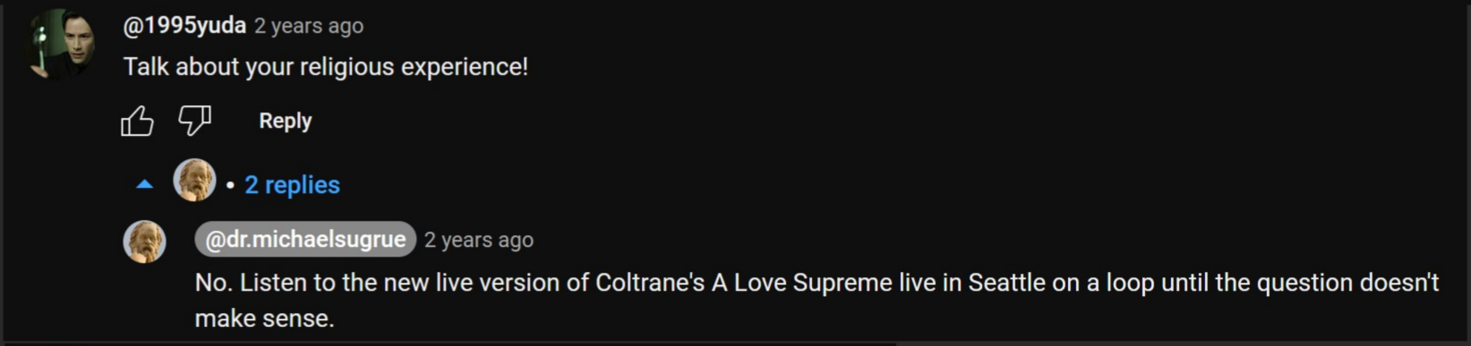
I platonically love you.

I know that's a statement.

My question would be, would you become president and be a philosopher king to help us all out?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said there is no point of flattering a sick old man with such a terrible idea. Dad's favorite Pope was Celestine V.

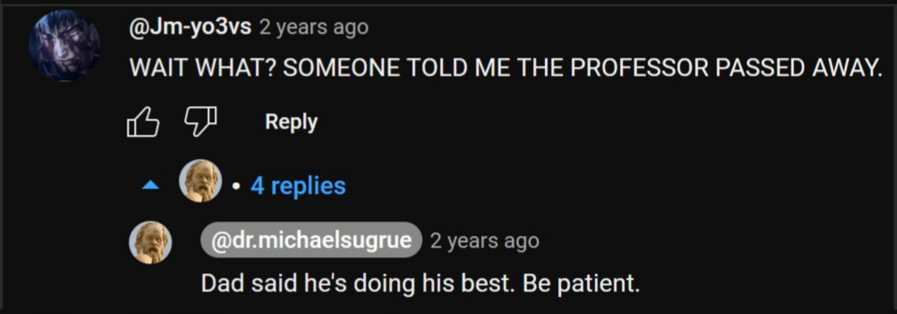


@1995yuda 2 years ago

Talk about your religious experience!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

No. Listen to the new live version of Coltrane's A Love Supreme live in Seattle on a loop until the question doesn't make sense.

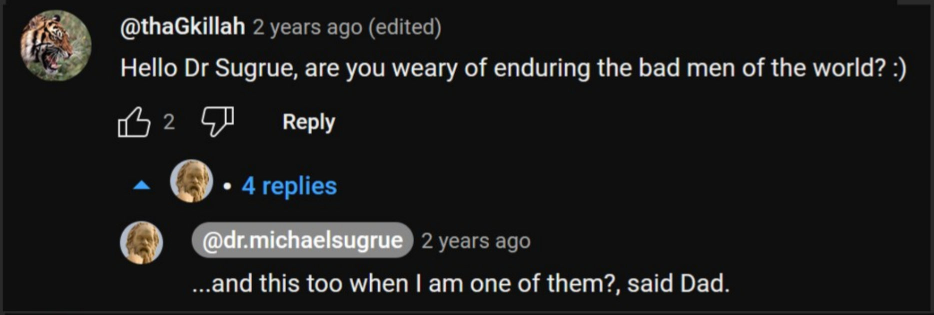


@Jm-yo3vs 2 years ago

WAIT WHAT? SOMEONE TOLD ME THE PROFESSOR PASSED AWAY.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said he's doing his best. Be patient.

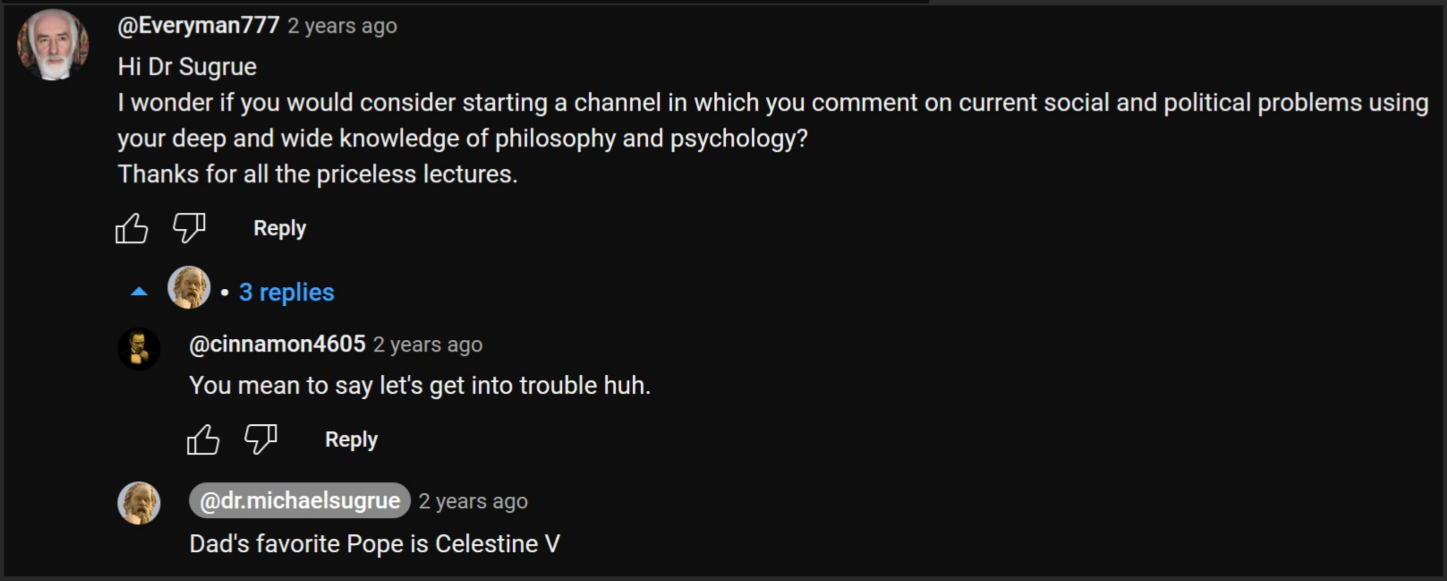


@thaGkillah 2 years ago (edited)

Hello Dr Sugrue, are you weary of enduring the bad men of the world? :)

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

...and this too when I am one of them?, said Dad.



@Everyman777 2 years ago

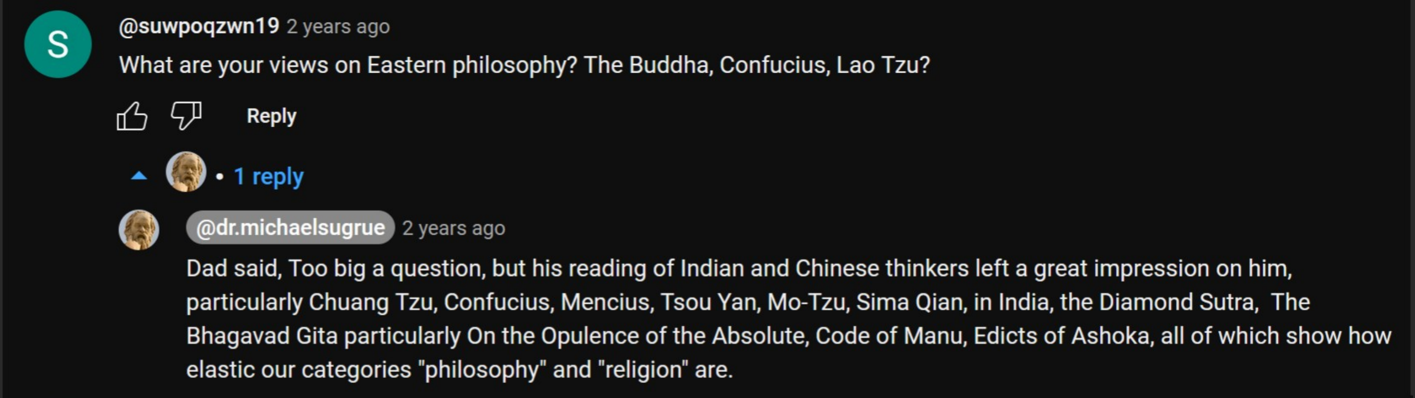
Hi Dr Sugrue
I wonder if you would consider starting a channel in which you comment on current social and political problems using your deep and wide knowledge of philosophy and psychology?
Thanks for all the priceless lectures.

@cinnamon4605 2 years ago

You mean to say let's get into trouble huh.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad's favorite Pope is Celestine V

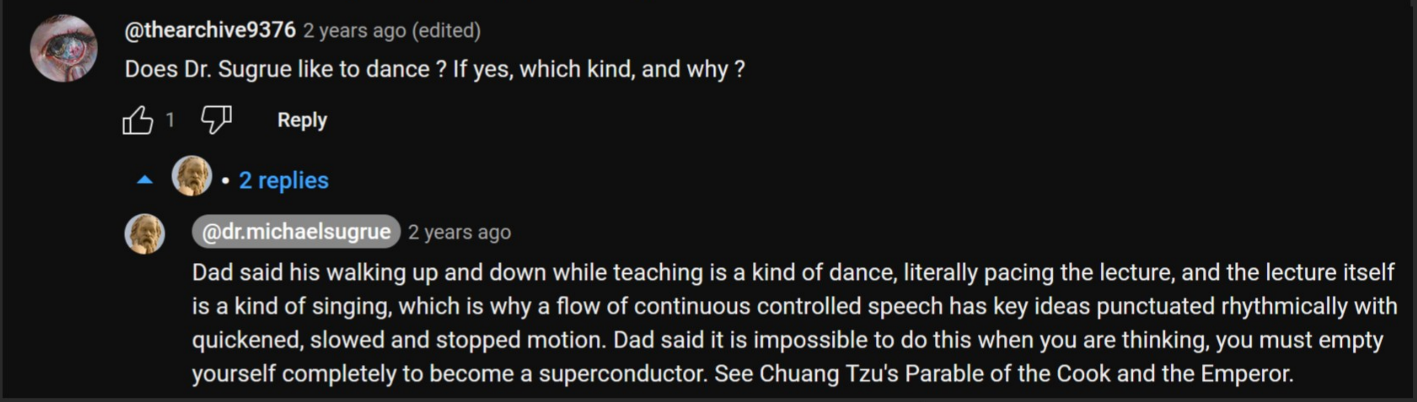


@suwpoqzwn19 2 years ago

What are your views on Eastern philosophy? The Buddha, Confucius, Lao Tzu?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, Too big a question, but his reading of Indian and Chinese thinkers left a great impression on him, particularly Chuang Tzu, Confucius, Mencius, Tsou Yan, Mo-Tzu, Sima Qian, in India, the Diamond Sutra, The Bhagavad Gita particularly On the Opulence of the Absolute, Code of Manu, Edicts of Ashoka, all of which show how elastic our categories "philosophy" and "religion" are.

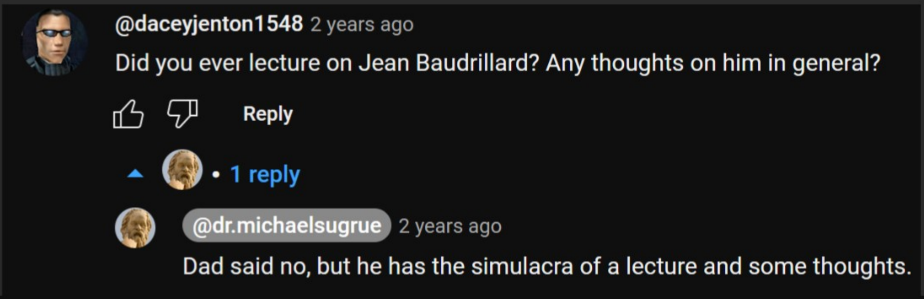


@thearchive9376 2 years ago (edited)

Does Dr. Sugrue like to dance ? If yes, which kind, and why ?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said his walking up and down while teaching is a kind of dance, literally pacing the lecture, and the lecture itself is a kind of singing, which is why a flow of continuous controlled speech has key ideas punctuated rhythmically with quickened, slowed and stopped motion. Dad said it is impossible to do this when you are thinking, you must empty yourself completely to become a superconductor. See Chuang Tzu's Parable of the Cook and the Emperor.

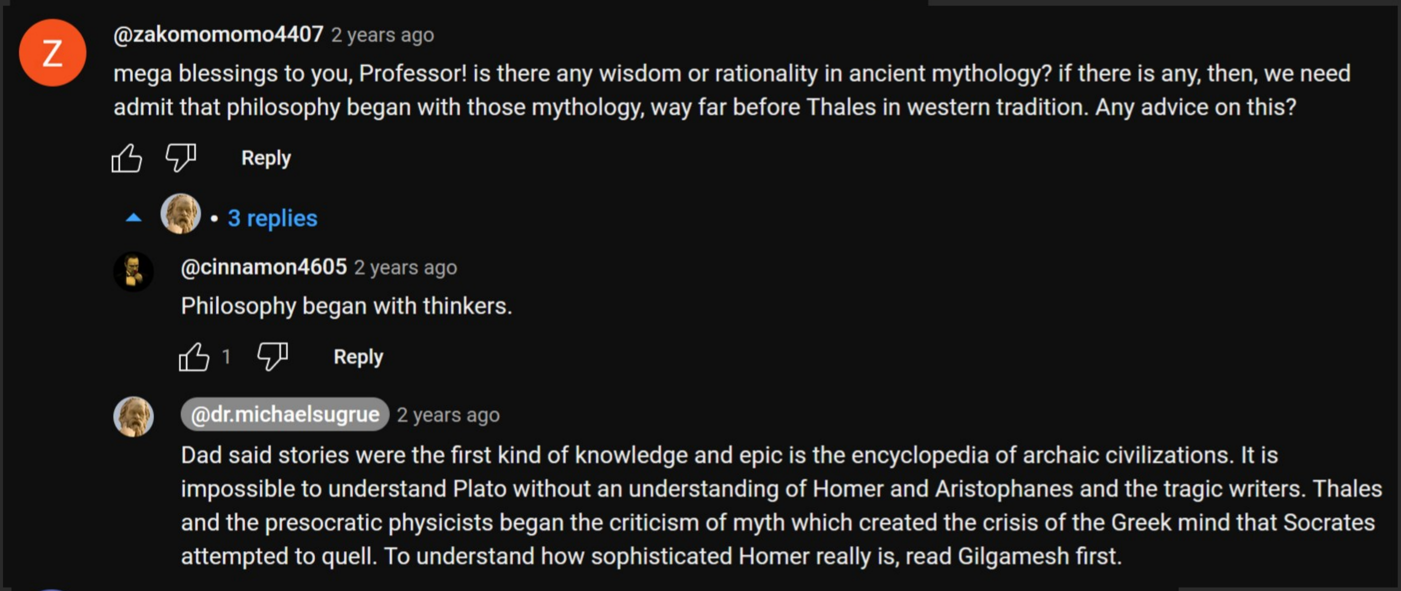


@daceyjenton1548 2 years ago

Did you ever lecture on Jean Baudrillard? Any thoughts on him in general?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said no, but he has the simulacra of a lecture and some thoughts.



@zakomomomo4407 2 years ago

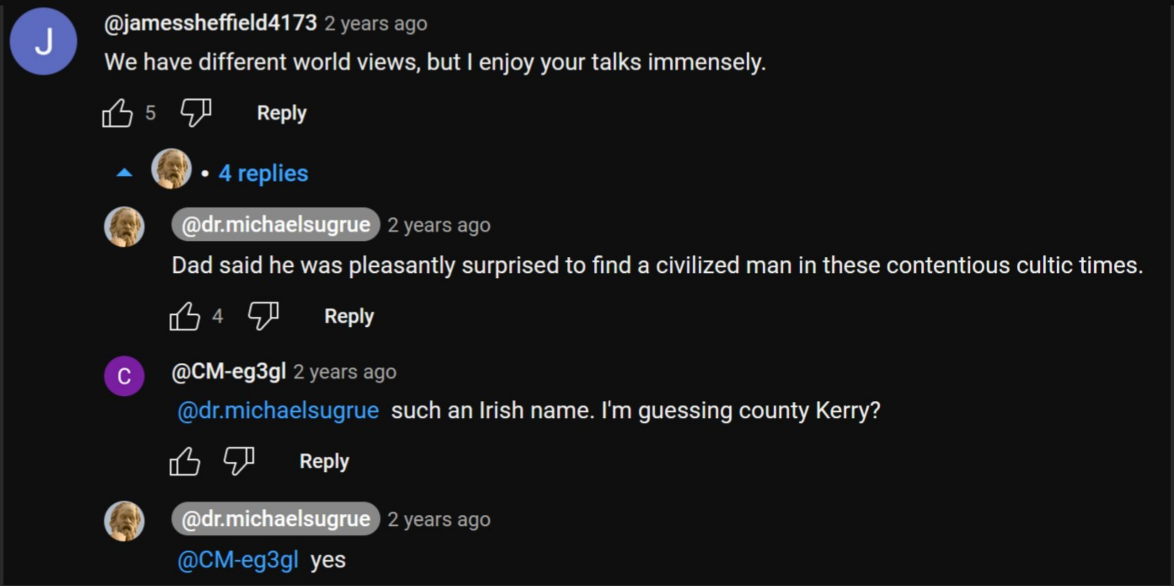
mega blessings to you, Professor! is there any wisdom or rationality in ancient mythology? if there is any, then, we need admit that philosophy began with those mythology, way far before Thales in western tradition. Any advice on this?

@cinnamon4605 2 years ago

Philosophy began with thinkers.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said stories were the first kind of knowledge and epic is the encyclopedia of archaic civilizations. It is impossible to understand Plato without an understanding of Homer and Aristophanes and the tragic writers. Thales and the presocratic physicists began the criticism of myth which created the crisis of the Greek mind that Socrates attempted to quell. To understand how sophisticated Homer really is, read Gilgamesh first.



@jamessheffield4173 2 years ago

We have different world views, but I enjoy your talks immensely.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

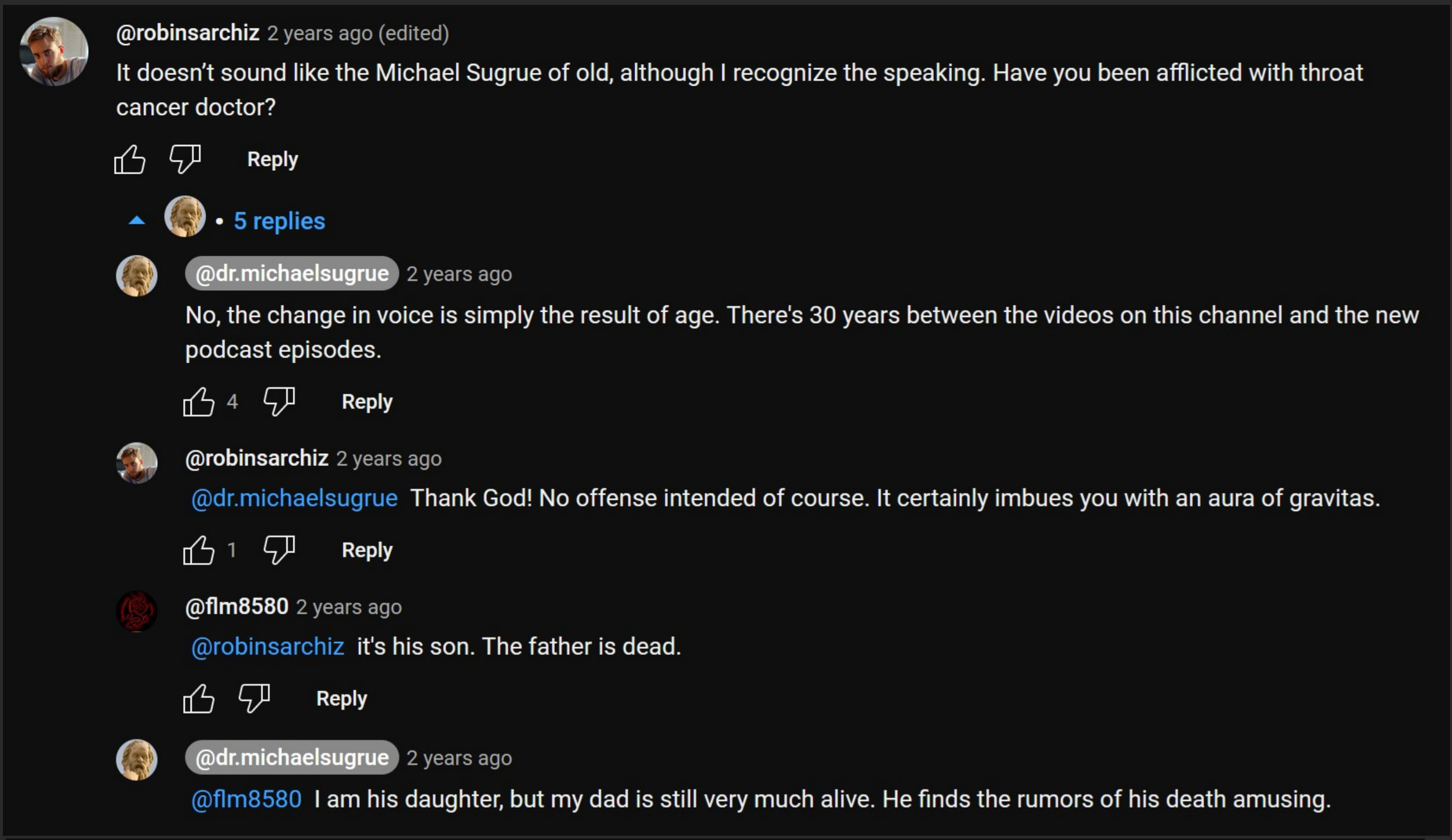
Dad said he was pleasantly surprised to find a civilized man in these contentious cultic times.

@CM-eg3gl 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue such an Irish name. I'm guessing county Kerry?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

@CM-eg3gl yes



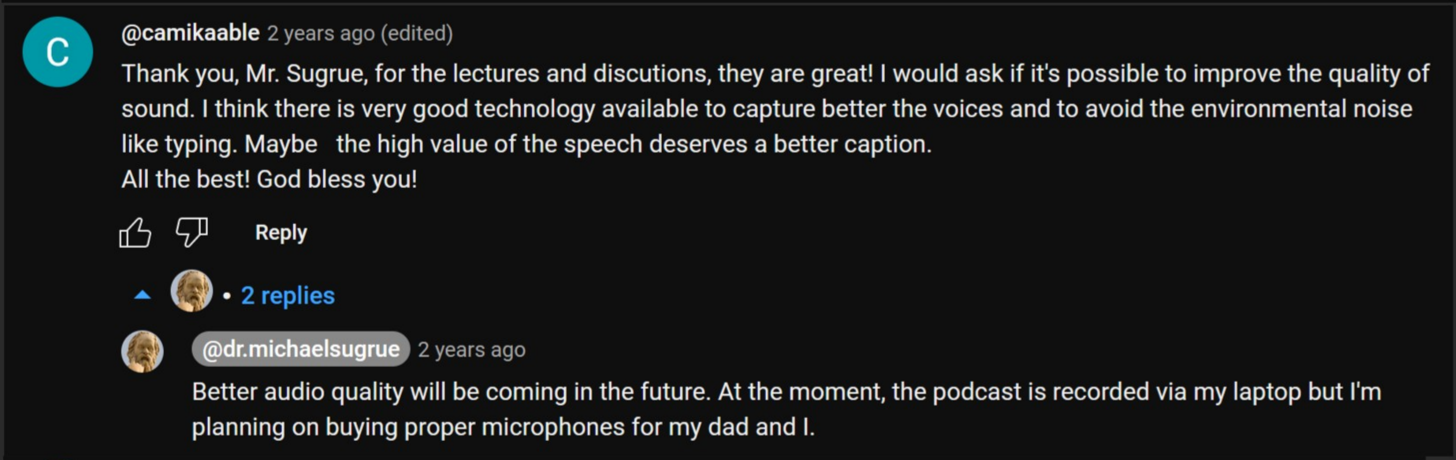
@robinsarchiz 2 years ago (edited)
It doesn’t sound like the Michael Sugrue of old, although I recognize the speaking. Have you been afflicted with throat cancer doctor?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
No, the change in voice is simply the result of age. There's 30 years between the videos on this channel and the new podcast episodes.

@robinsarchiz 2 years ago
@dr.michaelsugrue Thank God! No offense intended of course. It certainly imbues you with an aura of gravitas.

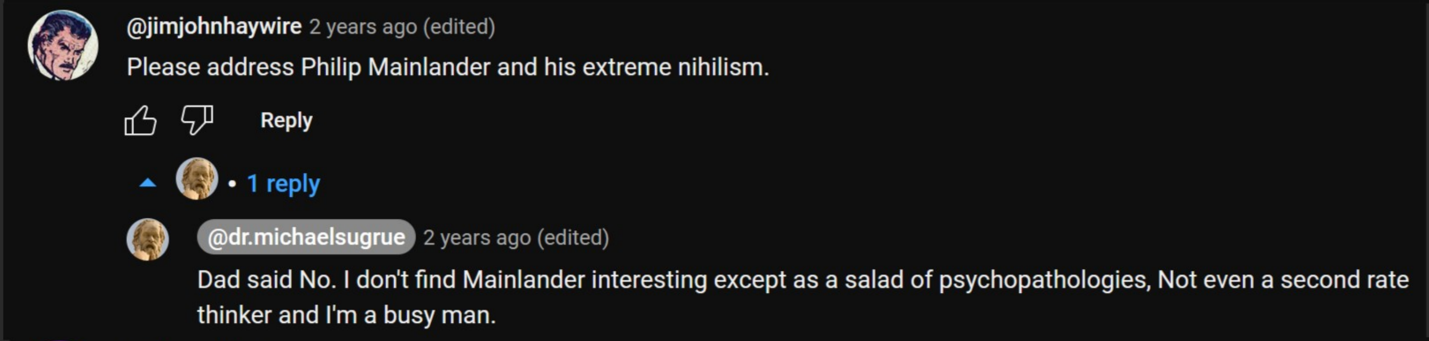
@flm8580 2 years ago
@robinsarchiz it's his son. The father is dead.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
@flm8580 I am his daughter, but my dad is still very much alive. He finds the rumors of his death amusing.



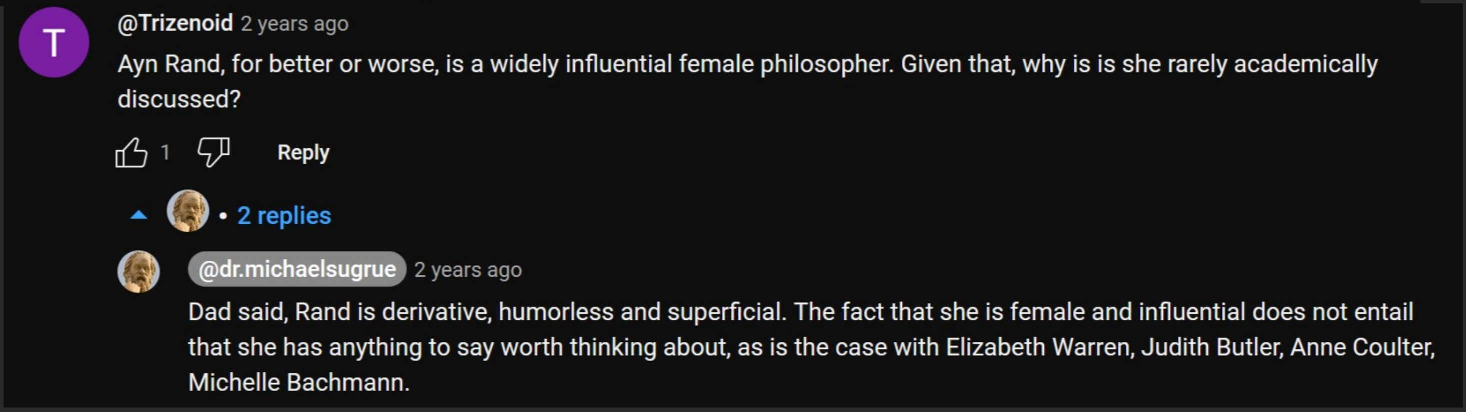
@camikaable 2 years ago (edited)
Thank you, Mr. Sugrue, for the lectures and discutions, they are great! I would ask if it's possible to improve the quality of sound. I think there is very good technology available to capture better the voices and to avoid the environmental noise like typing. Maybe the high value of the speech deserves a better caption.
All the best! God bless you!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Better audio quality will be coming in the future. At the moment, the podcast is recorded via my laptop but I'm planning on buying proper microphones for my dad and I.



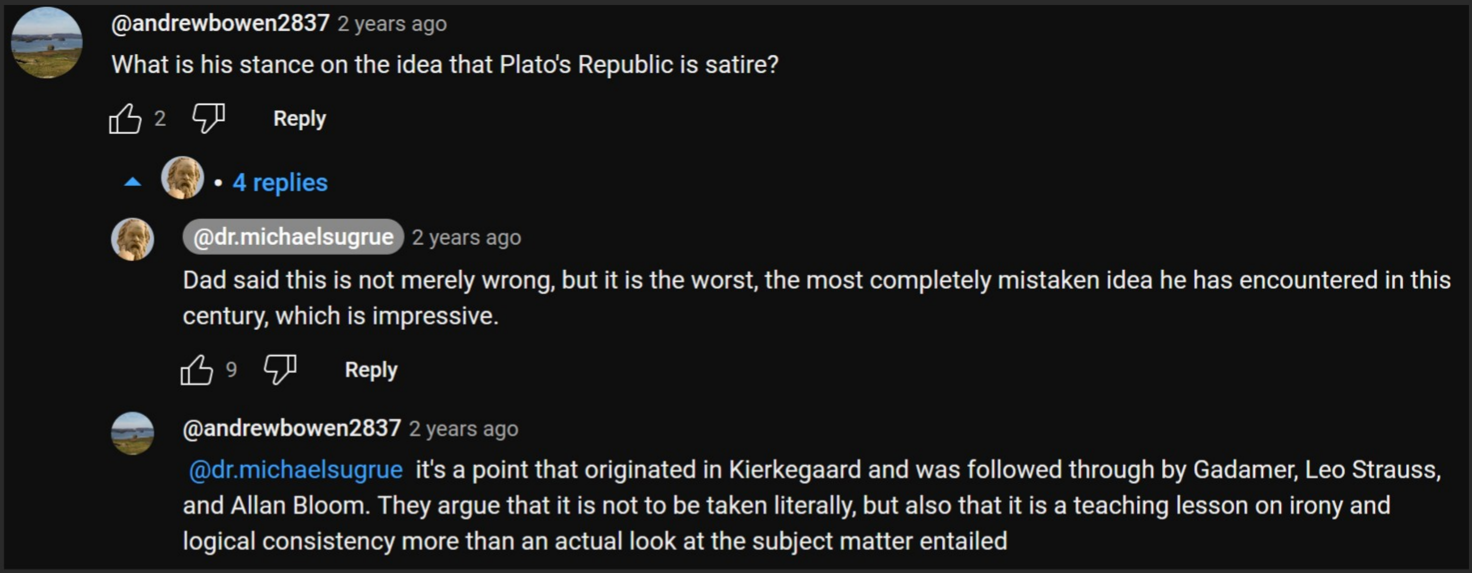
@jimjohnhaywire 2 years ago (edited)
Please address Philip Mainlander and his extreme nihilism.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)
Dad said No. I don't find Mainlander interesting except as a salad of psychopathologies, Not even a second rate thinker and I'm a busy man.



@Trizenoid 2 years ago
Ayn Rand, for better or worse, is a widely influential female philosopher. Given that, why is is she rarely academically discussed?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago
Dad said, Rand is derivative, humorless and superficial. The fact that she is female and influential does not entail that she has anything to say worth thinking about, as is the case with Elizabeth Warren, Judith Butler, Anne Coulter, Michelle Bachmann.



@andrewbowen2837 2 years ago

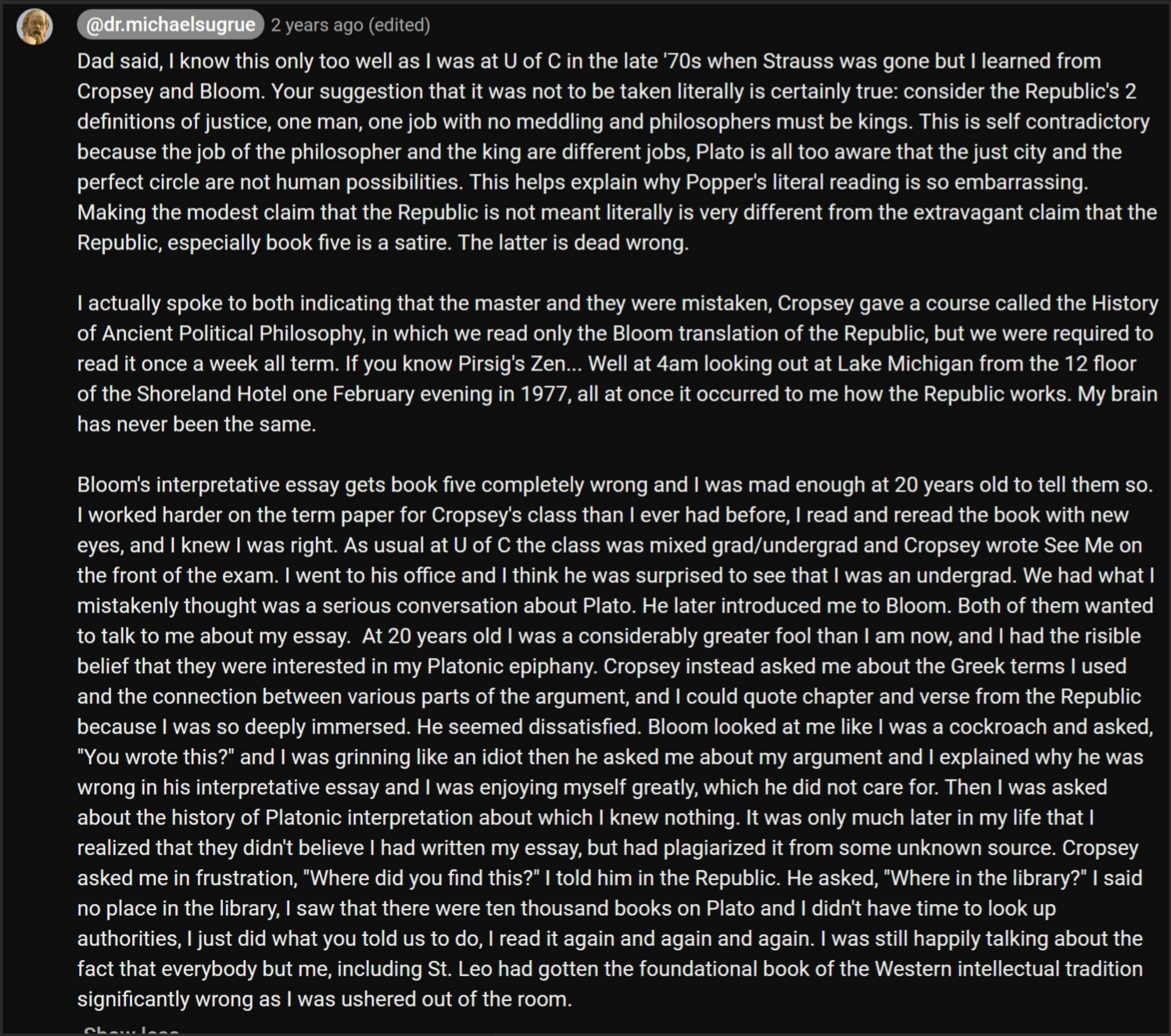
What is his stance on the idea that Plato's Republic is satire?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said this is not merely wrong, but it is the worst, the most completely mistaken idea he has encountered in this century, which is impressive.

@andrewbowen2837 2 years ago

@dr.michaelsugrue it's a point that originated in Kierkegaard and was followed through by Gadamer, Leo Strauss, and Allan Bloom. They argue that it is not to be taken literally, but also that it is a teaching lesson on irony and logical consistency more than an actual look at the subject matter entailed

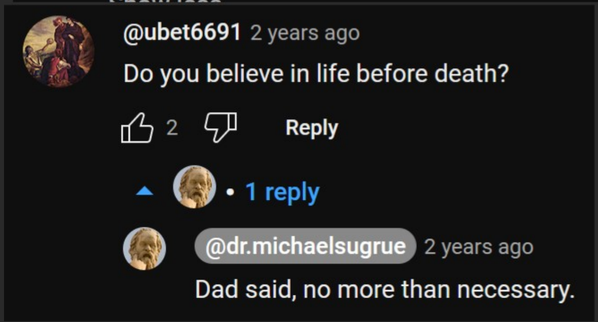


@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Dad said, I know this only too well as I was at U of C in the late '70s when Strauss was gone but I learned from Cropsey and Bloom. Your suggestion that it was not to be taken literally is certainly true: consider the Republic's 2 definitions of justice, one man, one job with no meddling and philosophers must be kings. This is self contradictory because the job of the philosopher and the king are different jobs, Plato is all too aware that the just city and the perfect circle are not human possibilities. This helps explain why Popper's literal reading is so embarrassing. Making the modest claim that the Republic is not meant literally is very different from the extravagant claim that the Republic, especially book five is a satire. The latter is dead wrong.

I actually spoke to both indicating that the master and they were mistaken, Cropsey gave a course called the History of Ancient Political Philosophy, in which we read only the Bloom translation of the Republic, but we were required to read it once a week all term. If you know Pirsig's Zen... Well at 4am looking out at Lake Michigan from the 12 floor of the Shoreland Hotel one February evening in 1977, all at once it occurred to me how the Republic works. My brain has never been the same.

Bloom's interpretative essay gets book five completely wrong and I was mad enough at 20 years old to tell them so. I worked harder on the term paper for Cropsey's class than I ever had before, I read and reread the book with new eyes, and I knew I was right. As usual at U of C the class was mixed grad/undergrad and Cropsey wrote See Me on the front of the exam. I went to his office and I think he was surprised to see that I was an undergrad. We had what I mistakenly thought was a serious conversation about Plato. He later introduced me to Bloom. Both of them wanted to talk to me about my essay. At 20 years old I was a considerably greater fool than I am now, and I had the risible belief that they were interested in my Platonic epiphany. Cropsey instead asked me about the Greek terms I used and the connection between various parts of the argument, and I could quote chapter and verse from the Republic because I was so deeply immersed. He seemed dissatisfied. Bloom looked at me like I was a cockroach and asked, "You wrote this?" and I was grinning like an idiot then he asked me about my argument and I explained why he was wrong in his interpretative essay and I was enjoying myself greatly, which he did not care for. Then I was asked about the history of Platonic interpretation about which I knew nothing. It was only much later in my life that I realized that they didn't believe I had written my essay, but had plagiarized it from some unknown source. Cropsey asked me in frustration, "Where did you find this?" I told him in the Republic. He asked, "Where in the library?" I said no place in the library, I saw that there were ten thousand books on Plato and I didn't have time to look up authorities, I just did what you told us to do, I read it again and again and again. I was still happily talking about the fact that everybody but me, including St. Leo had gotten the foundational book of the Western intellectual tradition significantly wrong as I was ushered out of the room.

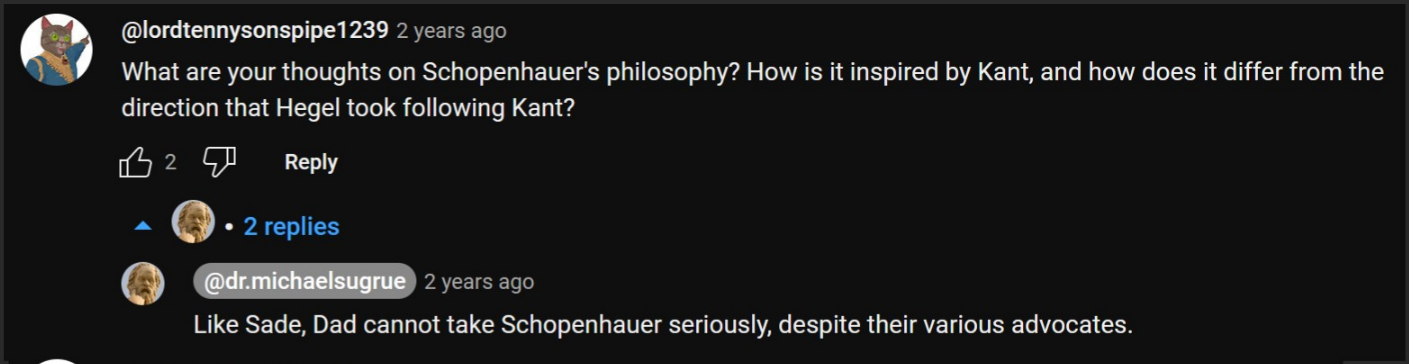


@ubet6691 2 years ago

Do you believe in life before death?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, no more than necessary.

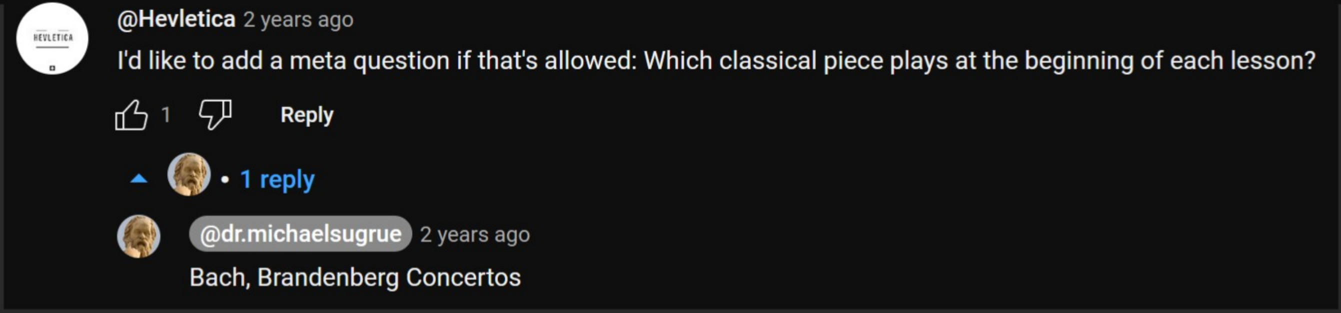


@lordtennysonspipe1239 2 years ago

What are your thoughts on Schopenhauer's philosophy? How is it inspired by Kant, and how does it differ from the direction that Hegel took following Kant?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Like Sade, Dad cannot take Schopenhauer seriously, despite their various advocates.

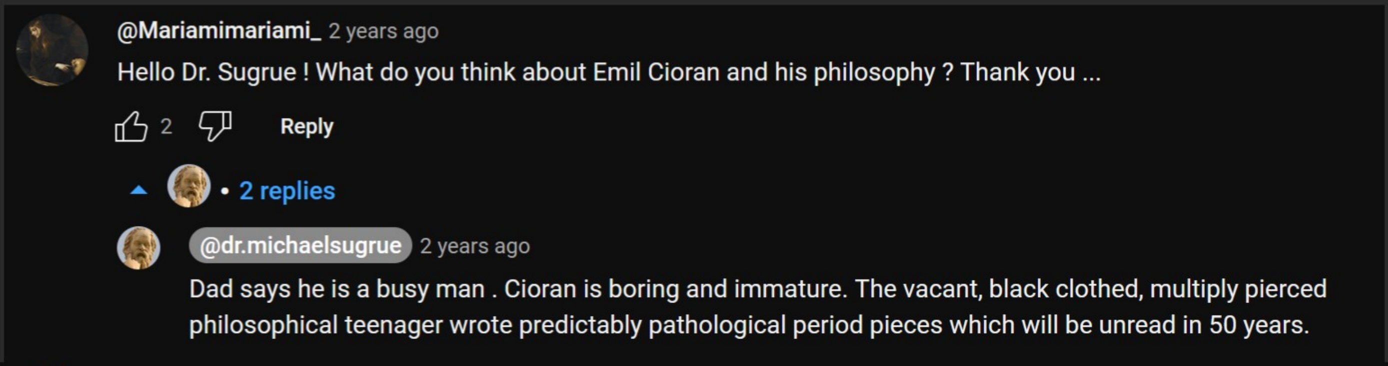


@Hevletica 2 years ago

I'd like to add a meta question if that's allowed: Which classical piece plays at the beginning of each lesson?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Bach, Brandenberg Concertos

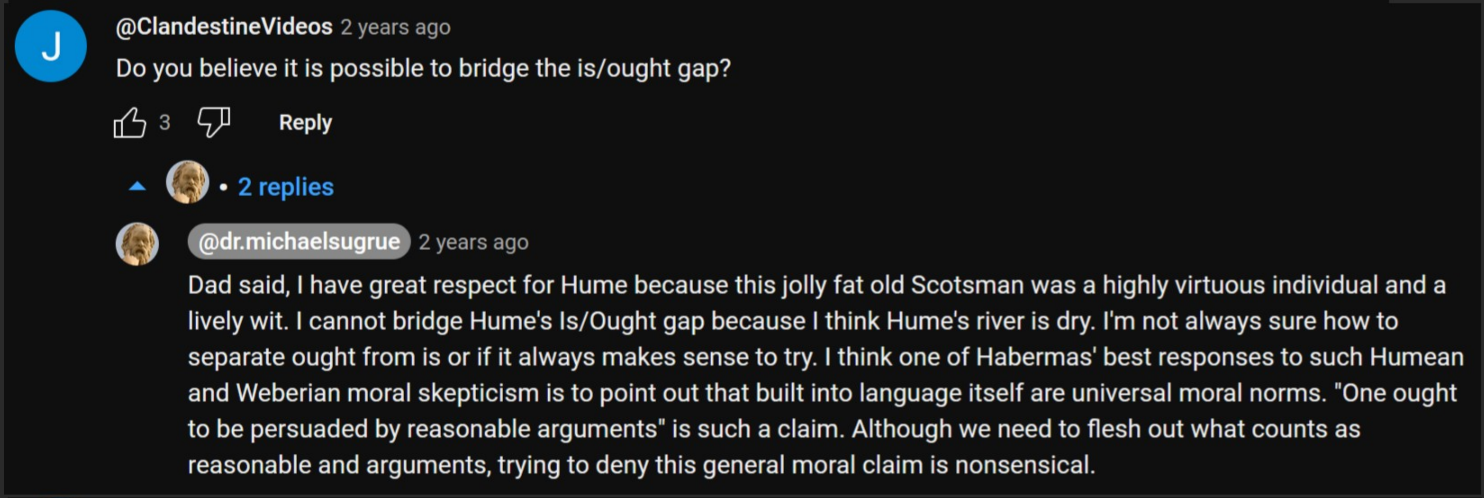


@Mariamimariami_ 2 years ago

Hello Dr. Sugrue ! What do you think about Emil Cioran and his philosophy ? Thank you ...

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad says he is a busy man . Cioran is boring and immature. The vacant, black clothed, multiply pierced philosophical teenager wrote predictably pathological period pieces which will be unread in 50 years.

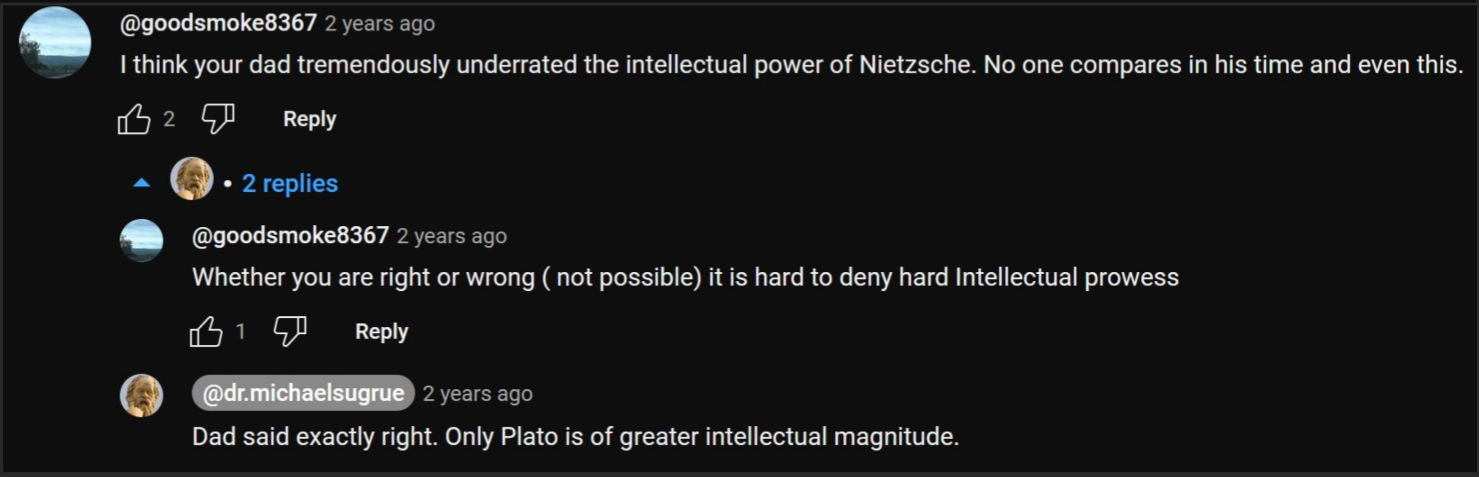


@ClandestineVideos 2 years ago

Do you believe it is possible to bridge the is/ought gap?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said, I have great respect for Hume because this jolly fat old Scotsman was a highly virtuous individual and a lively wit. I cannot bridge Hume's Is/Ought gap because I think Hume's river is dry. I'm not always sure how to separate ought from is or if it always makes sense to try. I think one of Habermas' best responses to such Humean and Weberian moral skepticism is to point out that built into language itself are universal moral norms. "One ought to be persuaded by reasonable arguments" is such a claim. Although we need to flesh out what counts as reasonable and arguments, trying to deny this general moral claim is nonsensical.



@goodsmoke8367 2 years ago

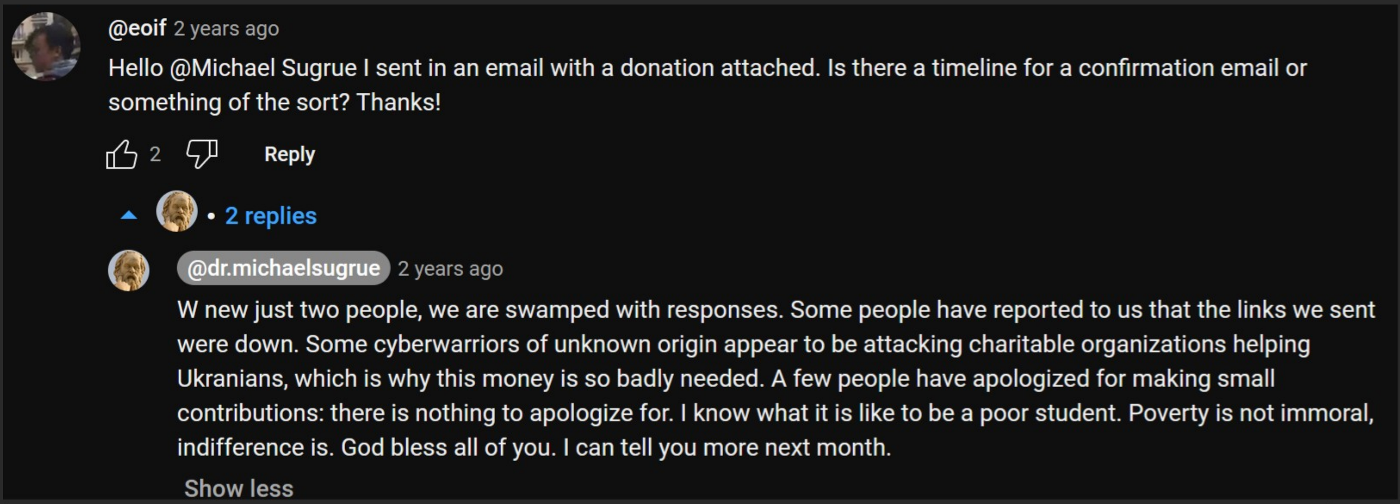
I think your dad tremendously underrated the intellectual power of Nietzsche. No one compares in his time and even this.

@goodsmoke8367 2 years ago

Whether you are right or wrong (not possible) it is hard to deny hard Intellectual prowess

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Dad said exactly right. Only Plato is of greater intellectual magnitude.

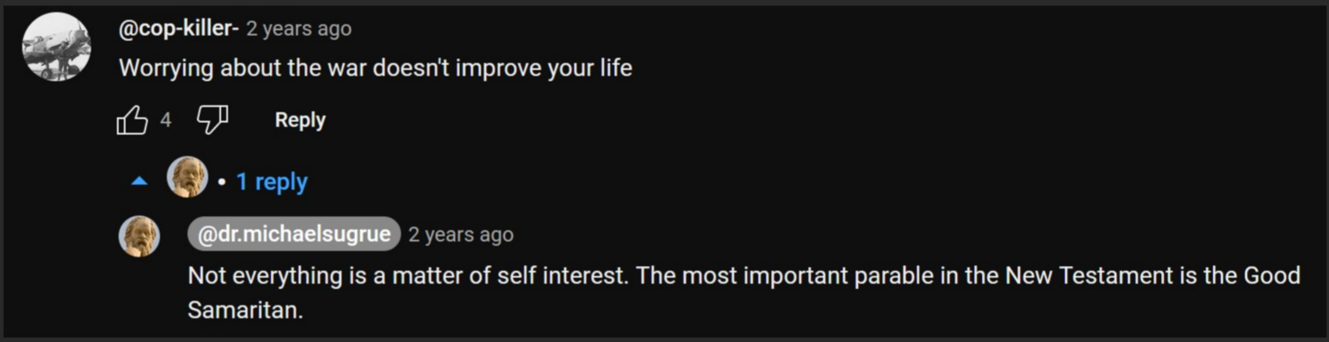


@eoif 2 years ago

Hello @Michael Sugrue I sent in an email with a donation attached. Is there a timeline for a confirmation email or something of the sort? Thanks!

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

W new just two people, we are swamped with responses. Some people have reported to us that the links we sent were down. Some cyberwarriors of unknown origin appear to be attacking charitable organizations helping Ukranians, which is why this money is so badly needed. A few people have apologized for making small contributions: there is nothing to apologize for. I know what it is like to be a poor student. Poverty is not immoral, indifference is. God bless all of you. I can tell you more next month.

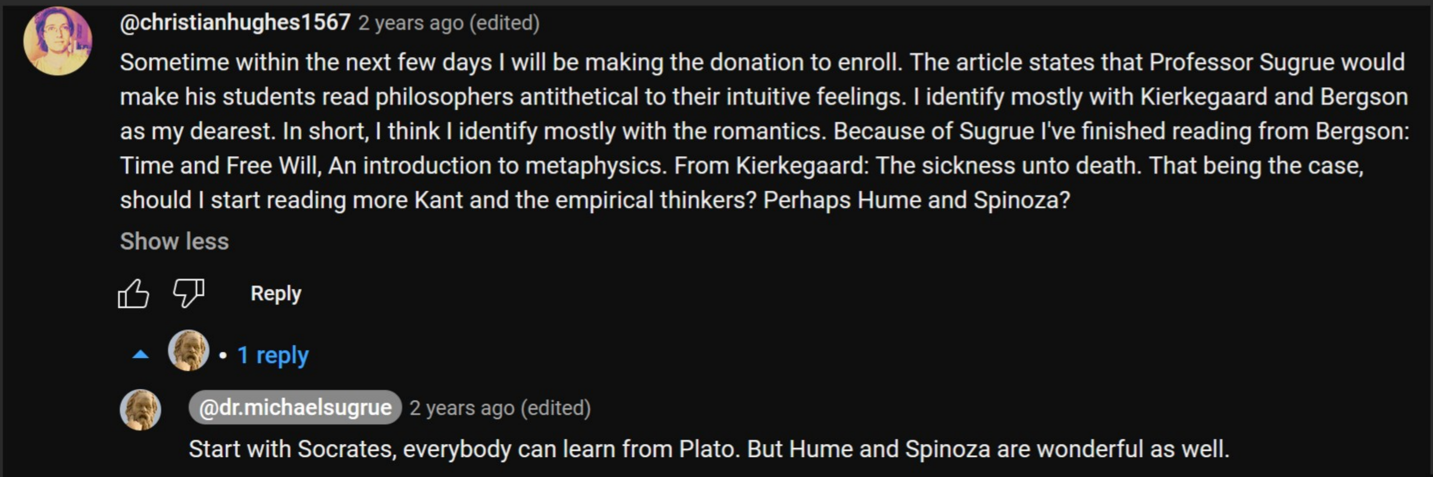


@cop-killer- 2 years ago

Worrying about the war doesn't improve your life

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Not everything is a matter of self interest. The most important parable in the New Testament is the Good Samaritan.

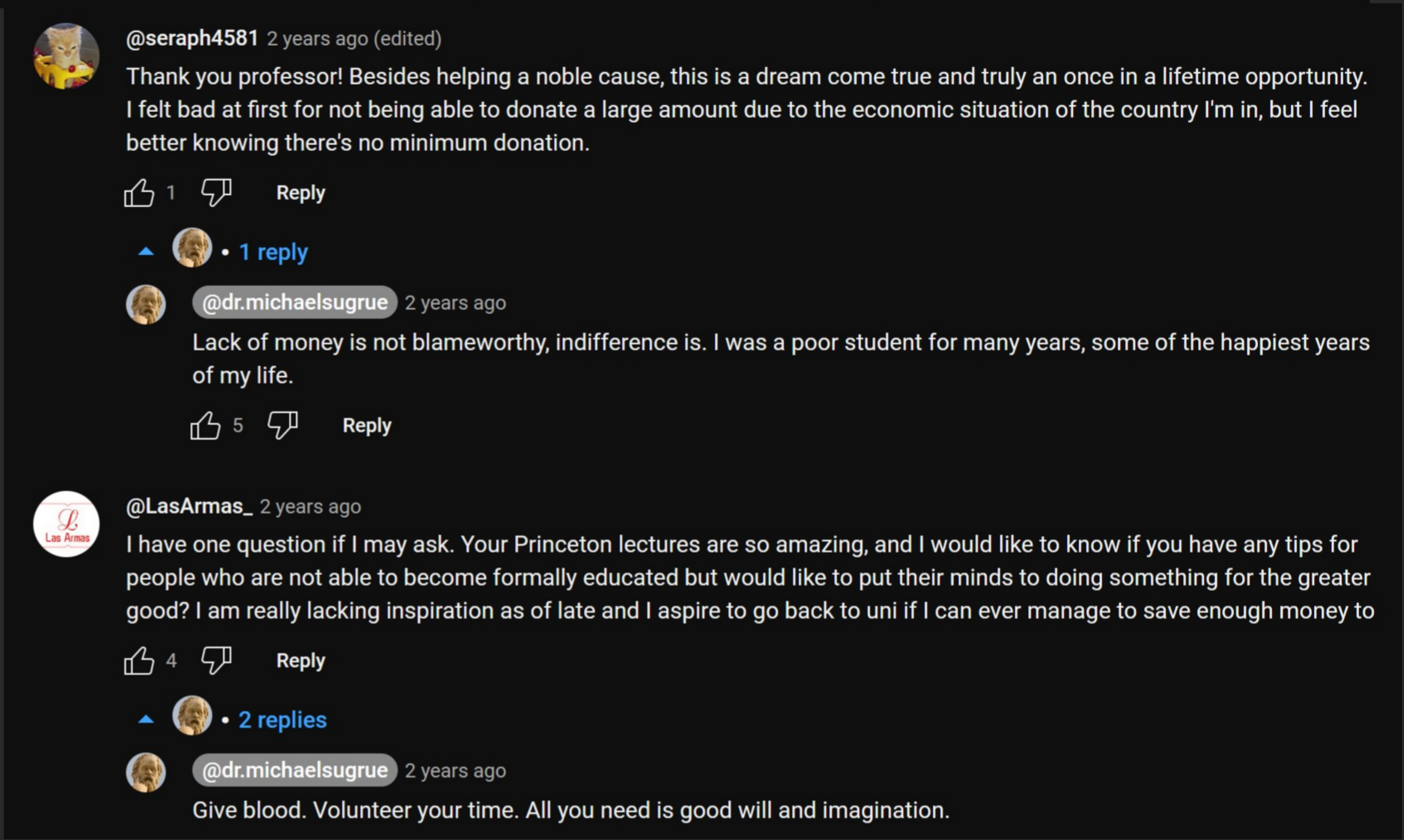


@christianhughes1567 2 years ago (edited)

Sometime within the next few days I will be making the donation to enroll. The article states that Professor Sugrue would make his students read philosophers antithetical to their intuitive feelings. I identify mostly with Kierkegaard and Bergson as my dearest. In short, I think I identify mostly with the romantics. Because of Sugrue I've finished reading from Bergson: Time and Free Will, An introduction to metaphysics. From Kierkegaard: The sickness unto death. That being the case, should I start reading more Kant and the empirical thinkers? Perhaps Hume and Spinoza?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

Start with Socrates, everybody can learn from Plato. But Hume and Spinoza are wonderful as well.



@seraph4581 2 years ago (edited)

Thank you professor! Besides helping a noble cause, this is a dream come true and truly an once in a lifetime opportunity. I felt bad at first for not being able to donate a large amount due to the economic situation of the country I'm in, but I feel better knowing there's no minimum donation.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

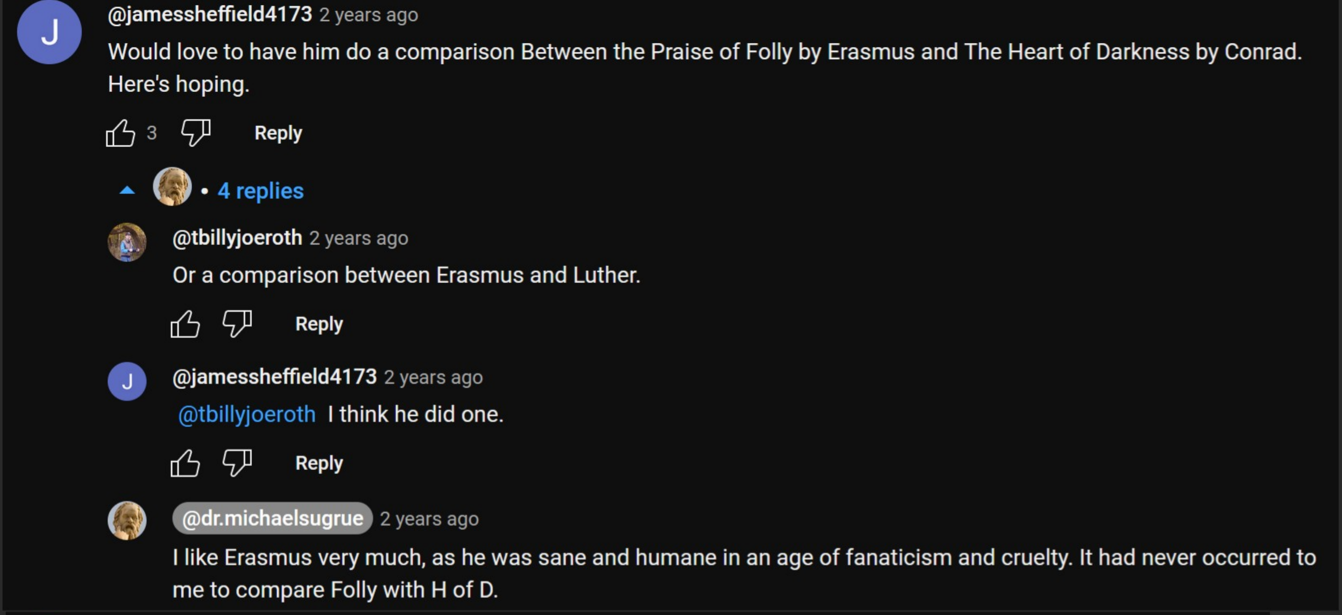
Lack of money is not blameworthy, indifference is. I was a poor student for many years, some of the happiest years of my life.

@LasArmas_ 2 years ago

I have one question if I may ask. Your Princeton lectures are so amazing, and I would like to know if you have any tips for people who are not able to become formally educated but would like to put their minds to doing something for the greater good? I am really lacking inspiration as of late and I aspire to go back to uni if I can ever manage to save enough money to

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

Give blood. Volunteer your time. All you need is good will and imagination.



@jamessheffield4173 2 years ago

Would love to have him do a comparison Between the Praise of Folly by Erasmus and The Heart of Darkness by Conrad. Here's hoping.

@tbillyjoeroth 2 years ago

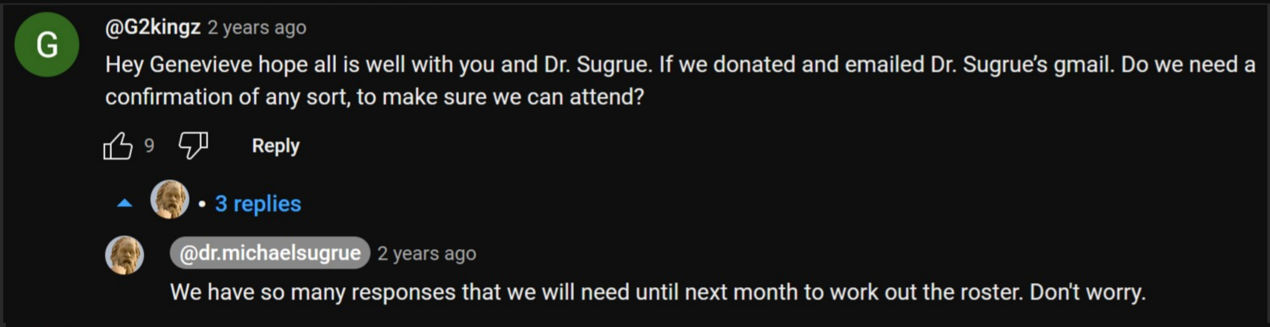
Or a comparison between Erasmus and Luther.

@jamessheffield4173 2 years ago

@tbillyjoeroth I think he did one.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

I like Erasmus very much, as he was sane and humane in an age of fanaticism and cruelty. It had never occurred to me to compare Folly with H of D.

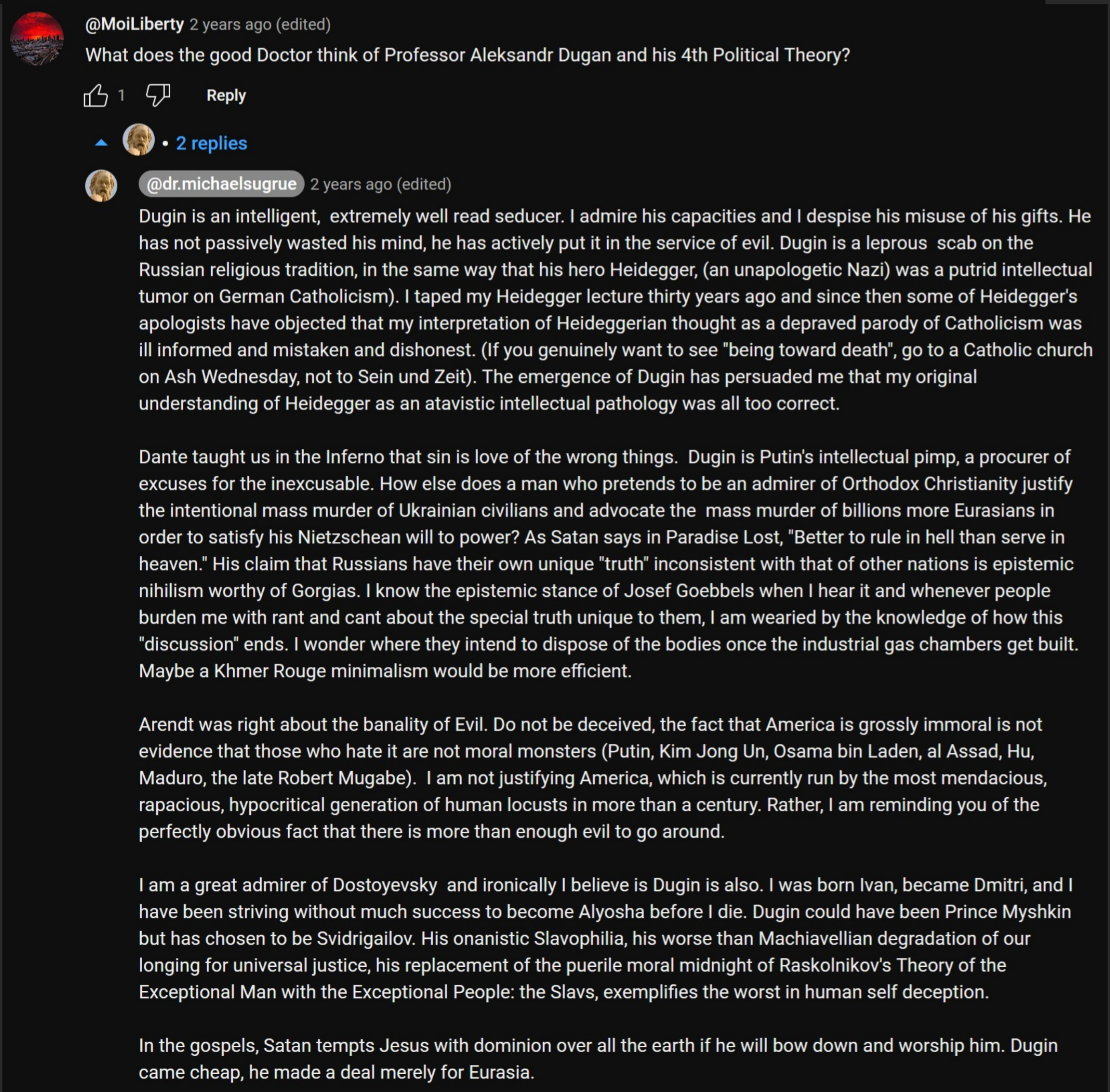


@G2kingz 2 years ago

Hey Genevieve hope all is well with you and Dr. Sugrue. If we donated and emailed Dr. Sugrue's gmail. Do we need a confirmation of any sort, to make sure we can attend?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

We have so many responses that we will need until next month to work out the roster. Don't worry.



@MoiLiberty 2 years ago (edited)

What does the good Doctor think of Professor Aleksandr Dugan and his 4th Political Theory?

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago (edited)

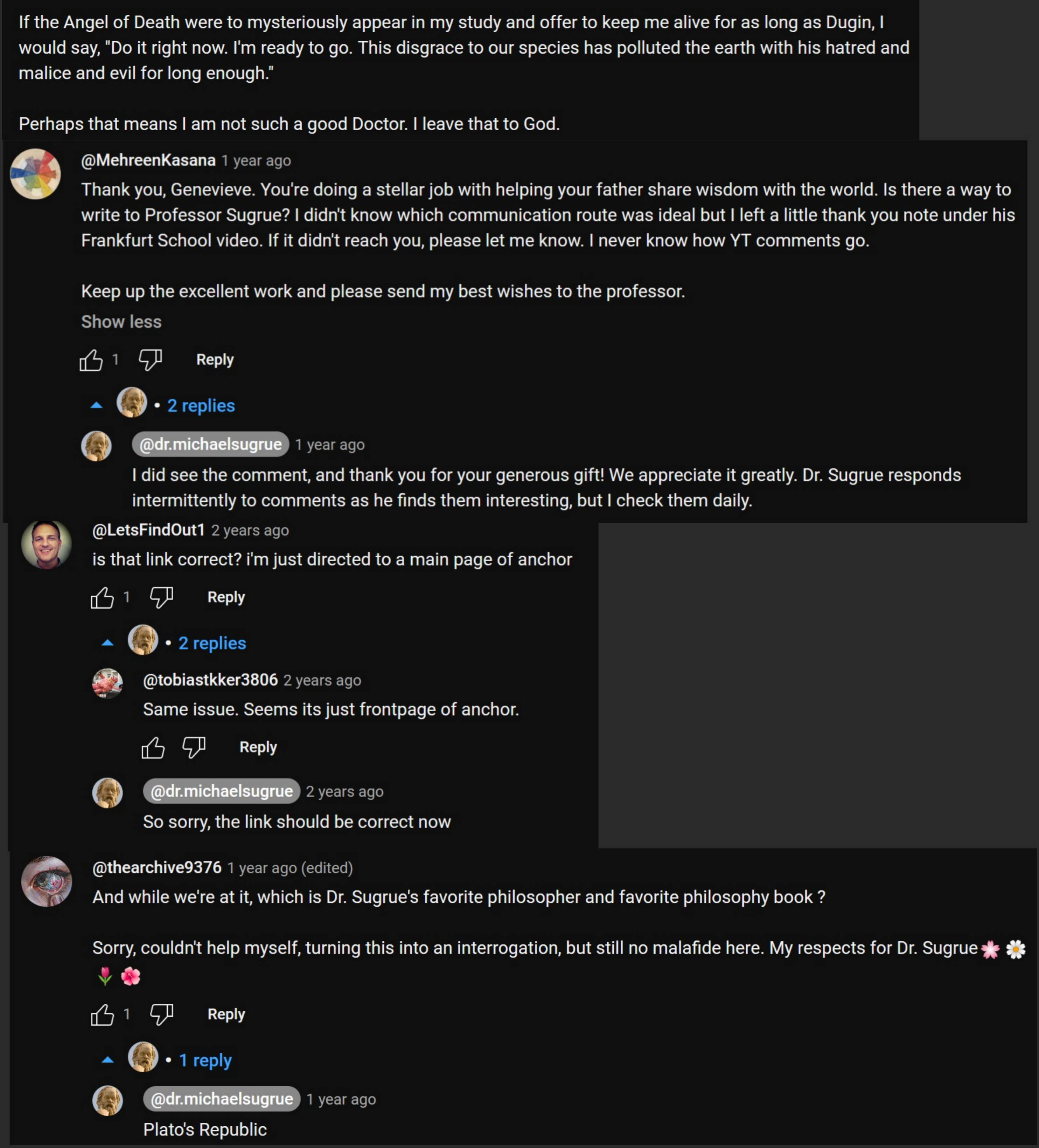
Dugin is an intelligent, extremely well read seducer. I admire his capacities and I despise his misuse of his gifts. He has not passively wasted his mind, he has actively put it in the service of evil. Dugin is a leprous scab on the Russian religious tradition, in the same way that his hero Heidegger, (an unapologetic Nazi) was a putrid intellectual tumor on German Catholicism). I taped my Heidegger lecture thirty years ago and since then some of Heidegger's apologists have objected that my interpretation of Heideggerian thought as a depraved parody of Catholicism was ill informed and mistaken and dishonest. (If you genuinely want to see "being toward death", go to a Catholic church on Ash Wednesday, not to Sein und Zeit). The emergence of Dugin has persuaded me that my original understanding of Heidegger as an atavistic intellectual pathology was all too correct.

Dante taught us in the Inferno that sin is love of the wrong things. Dugin is Putin's intellectual pimp, a procurer of excuses for the inexcusable. How else does a man who pretends to be an admirer of Orthodox Christianity justify the intentional mass murder of Ukrainian civilians and advocate the mass murder of billions more Eurasians in order to satisfy his Nietzschean will to power? As Satan says in Paradise Lost, "Better to rule in hell than serve in heaven." His claim that Russians have their own unique "truth" inconsistent with that of other nations is epistemic nihilism worthy of Gorgias. I know the epistemic stance of Josef Goebbels when I hear it and whenever people burden me with rant and cant about the special truth unique to them, I am wearied by the knowledge of how this "discussion" ends. I wonder where they intend to dispose of the bodies once the industrial gas chambers get built. Maybe a Khmer Rouge minimalism would be more efficient.

Arendt was right about the banality of Evil. Do not be deceived, the fact that America is grossly immoral is not evidence that those who hate it are not moral monsters (Putin, Kim Jong Un, Osama bin Laden, al Assad, Hu, Maduro, the late Robert Mugabe). I am not justifying America, which is currently run by the most mendacious, rapacious, hypocritical generation of human locusts in more than a century. Rather, I am reminding you of the perfectly obvious fact that there is more than enough evil to go around.

I am a great admirer of Dostoyevsky and ironically I believe is Dugin is also. I was born Ivan, became Dmitri, and I have been striving without much success to become Alyosha before I die. Dugin could have been Prince Myshkin but has chosen to be Svidrigailov. His onanistic Slavophilia, his worse than Machiavellian degradation of our longing for universal justice, his replacement of the puerile moral midnight of Raskolnikov's Theory of the Exceptional Man with the Exceptional People: the Slavs, exemplifies the worst in human self deception.

In the gospels, Satan tempts Jesus with dominion over all the earth if he will bow down and worship him. Dugin came cheap, he made a deal merely for Eurasia.



If the Angel of Death were to mysteriously appear in my study and offer to keep me alive for as long as Dugin, I would say, "Do it right now. I'm ready to go. This disgrace to our species has polluted the earth with his hatred and malice and evil for long enough."

Perhaps that means I am not such a good Doctor. I leave that to God.

@MehreenKasana 1 year ago

Thank you, Genevieve. You're doing a stellar job with helping your father share wisdom with the world. Is there a way to write to Professor Sugrue? I didn't know which communication route was ideal but I left a little thank you note under his Frankfurt School video. If it didn't reach you, please let me know. I never know how YT comments go.

Keep up the excellent work and please send my best wishes to the professor.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I did see the comment, and thank you for your generous gift! We appreciate it greatly. Dr. Sugrue responds intermittently to comments as he finds them interesting, but I check them daily.

@LetsFindOut1 2 years ago

is that link correct? i'm just directed to a main page of anchor

@tobiastkker3806 2 years ago

Same issue. Seems its just frontpage of anchor.

@dr.michaelsugrue 2 years ago

So sorry, the link should be correct now

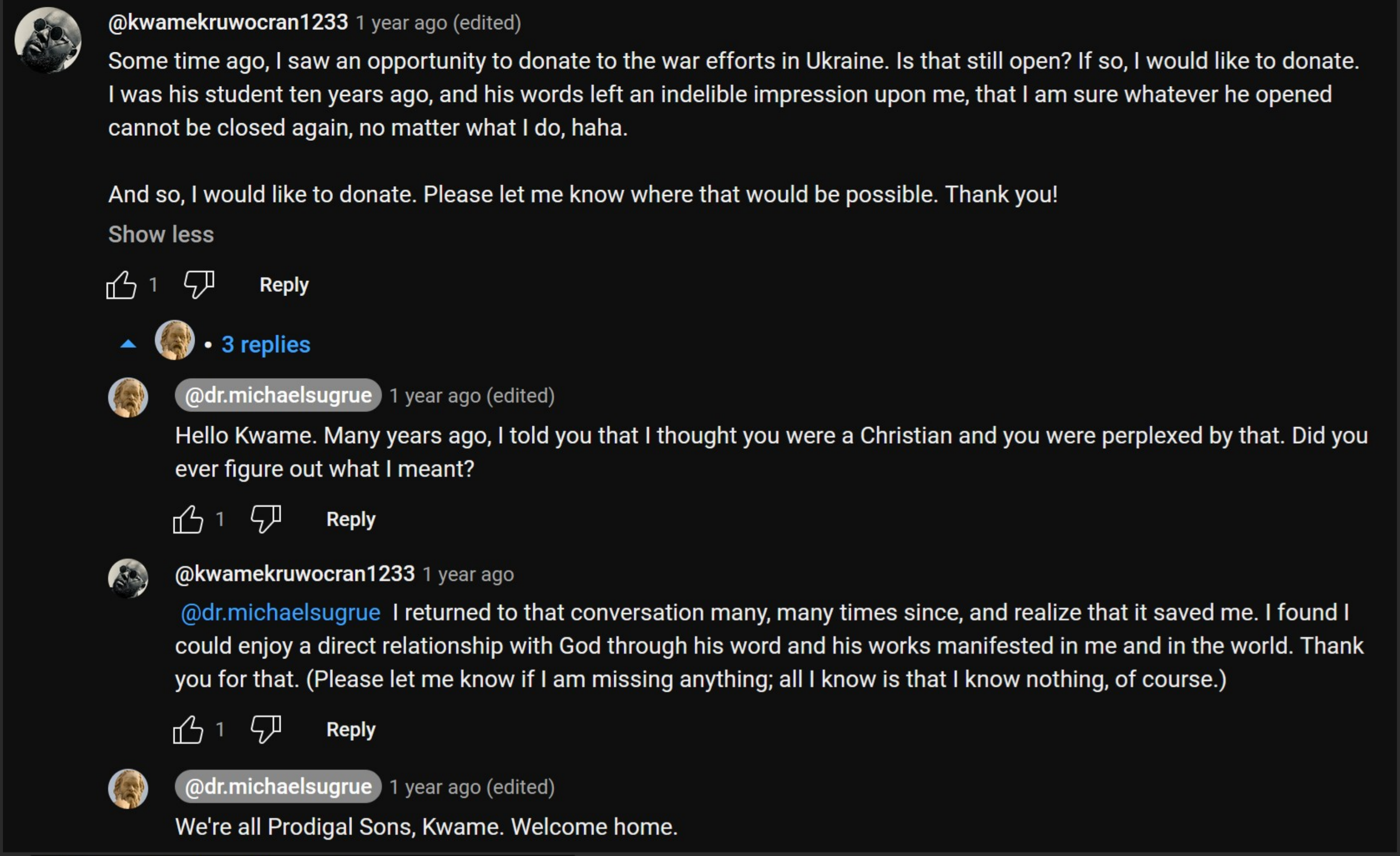
@thearchive9376 1 year ago (edited)

And while we're at it, which is Dr. Sugrue's favorite philosopher and favorite philosophy book ?

Sorry, couldn't help myself, turning this into an interrogation, but still no malafide here. My respects for Dr. Sugrue 🌸 🌼 🌷 🌺

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Plato's Republic



@kwamekruwocran1233 1 year ago (edited)

Some time ago, I saw an opportunity to donate to the war efforts in Ukraine. Is that still open? If so, I would like to donate. I was his student ten years ago, and his words left an indelible impression upon me, that I am sure whatever he opened cannot be closed again, no matter what I do, haha.

And so, I would like to donate. Please let me know where that would be possible. Thank you!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

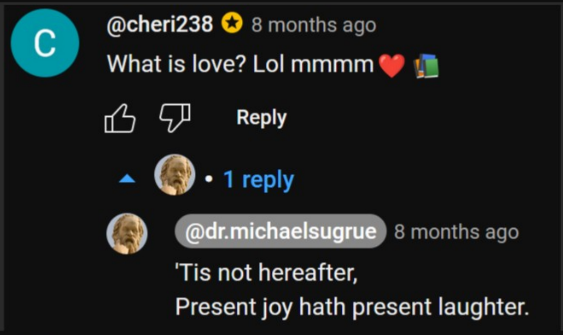
Hello Kwame. Many years ago, I told you that I thought you were a Christian and you were perplexed by that. Did you ever figure out what I meant?

@kwamekruwocran1233 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue I returned to that conversation many, many times since, and realize that it saved me. I found I could enjoy a direct relationship with God through his word and his works manifested in me and in the world. Thank you for that. (Please let me know if I am missing anything; all I know is that I know nothing, of course.)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

We're all Prodigal Sons, Kwame. Welcome home.

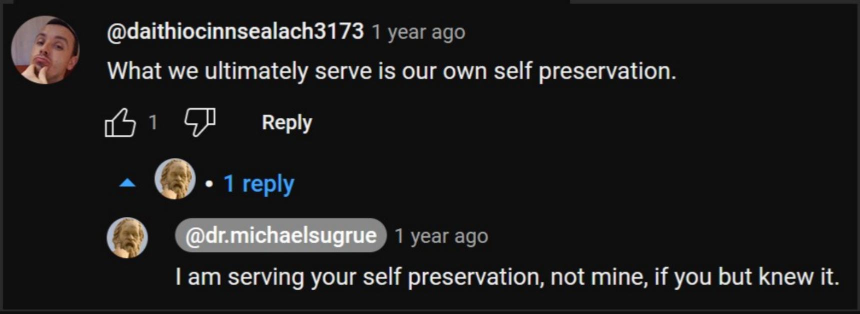


@cheri238 8 months ago

What is love? Lol mmmm ❤️ 📚

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

'Tis not hereafter,
Present joy hath present laughter.

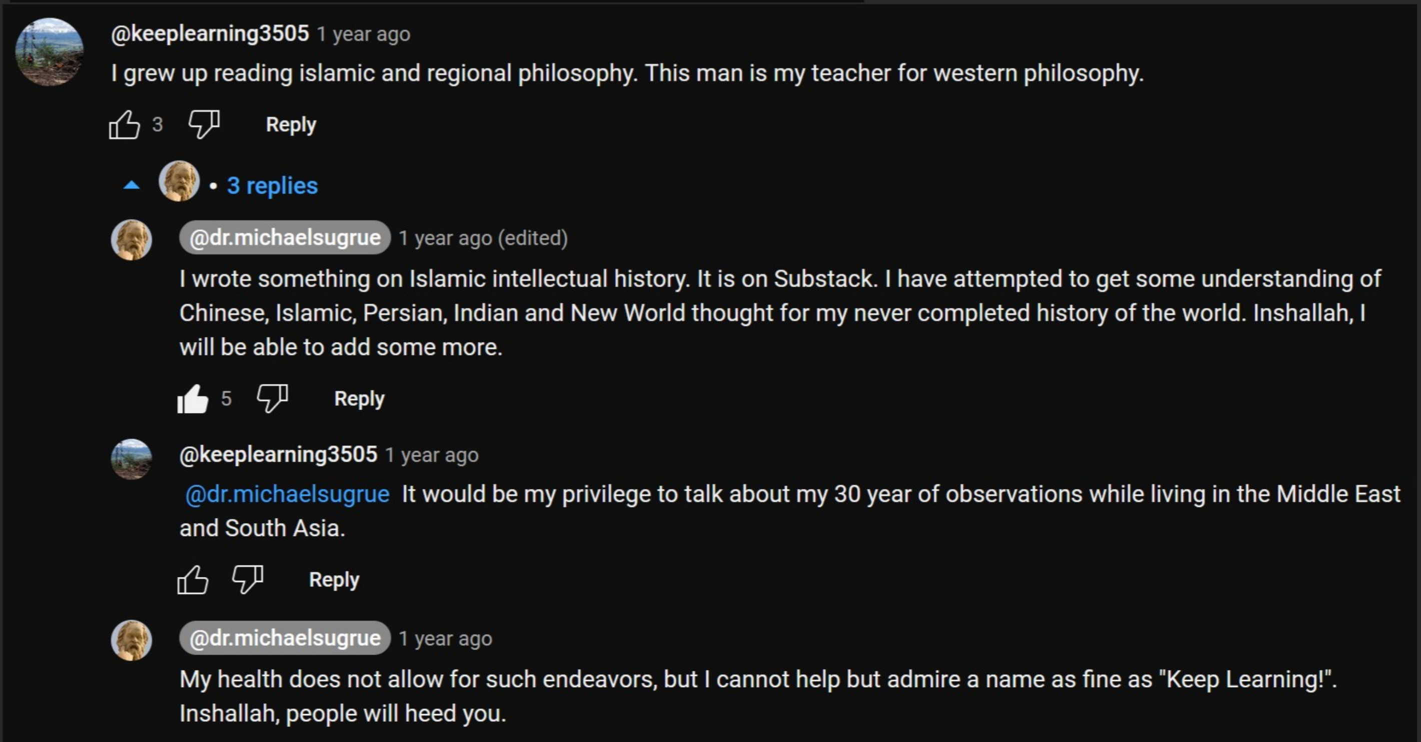


@daithiocinnsealach3173 1 year ago

What we ultimately serve is our own self preservation.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I am serving your self preservation, not mine, if you but knew it.



@keeplearning3505 1 year ago

I grew up reading islamic and regional philosophy. This man is my teacher for western philosophy.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

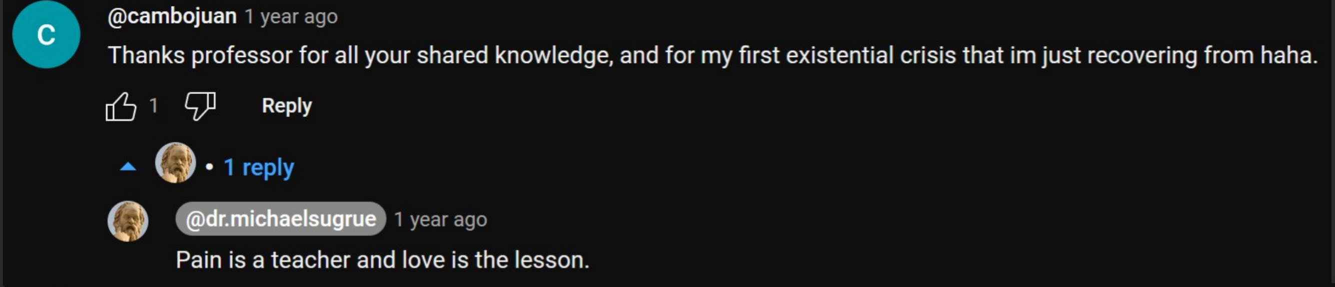
I wrote something on Islamic intellectual history. It is on Substack. I have attempted to get some understanding of Chinese, Islamic, Persian, Indian and New World thought for my never completed history of the world. Inshallah, I will be able to add some more.

@keeplearning3505 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue It would be my privilege to talk about my 30 year of observations while living in the Middle East and South Asia.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

My health does not allow for such endeavors, but I cannot help but admire a name as fine as "Keep Learning!". Inshallah, people will heed you.

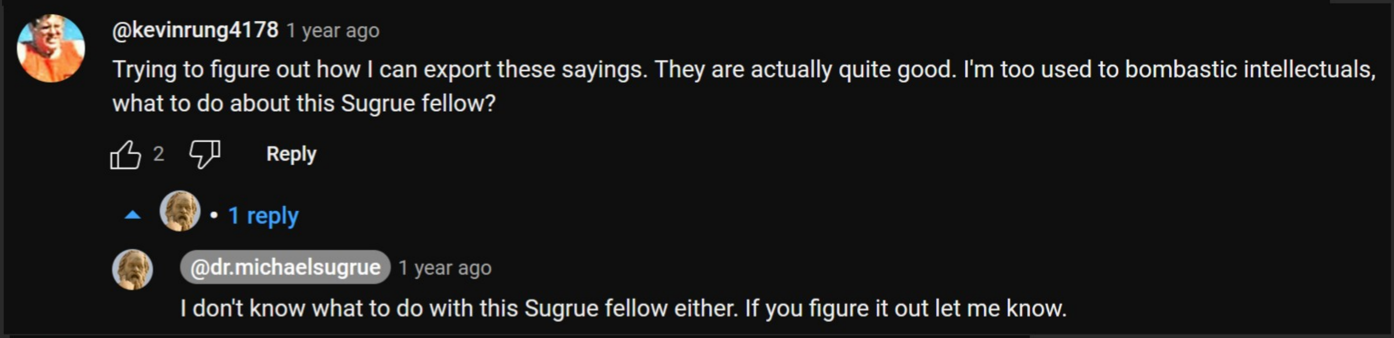


@cambojuan 1 year ago

Thanks professor for all your shared knowledge, and for my first existential crisis that im just recovering from haha.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Pain is a teacher and love is the lesson.

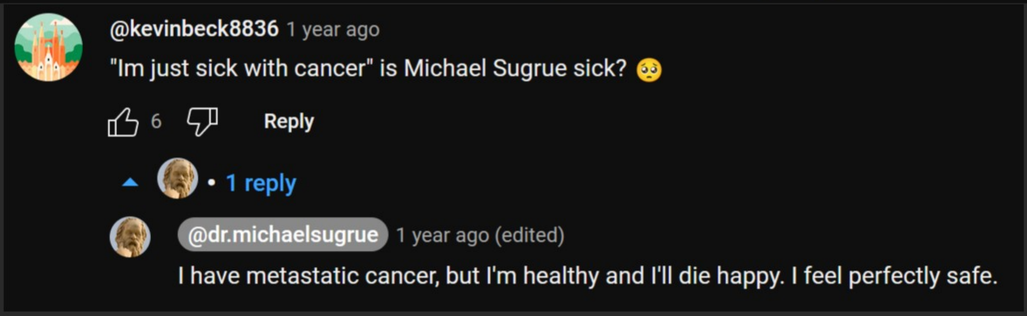


@kevinrung4178 1 year ago

Trying to figure out how I can export these sayings. They are actually quite good. I'm too used to bombastic intellectuals, what to do about this Sugrue fellow?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't know what to do with this Sugrue fellow either. If you figure it out let me know.

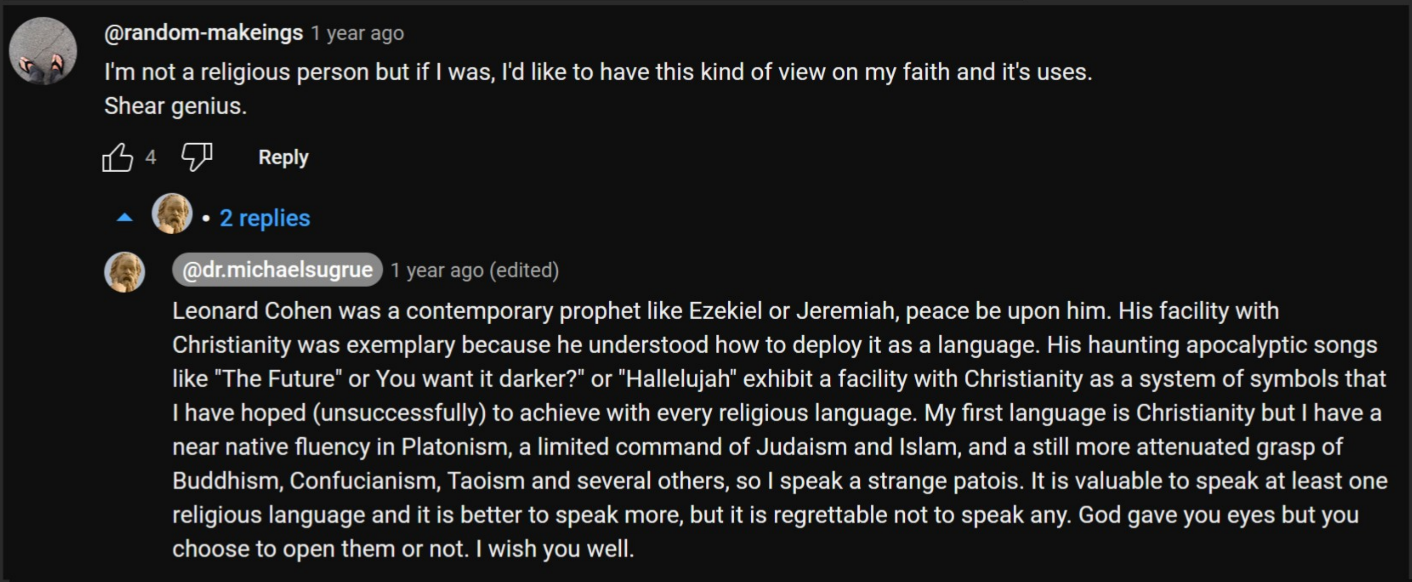


@kevinbeck8836 1 year ago

"Im just sick with cancer" is Michael Sugrue sick? 🥺

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I have metastatic cancer, but I'm healthy and I'll die happy. I feel perfectly safe.

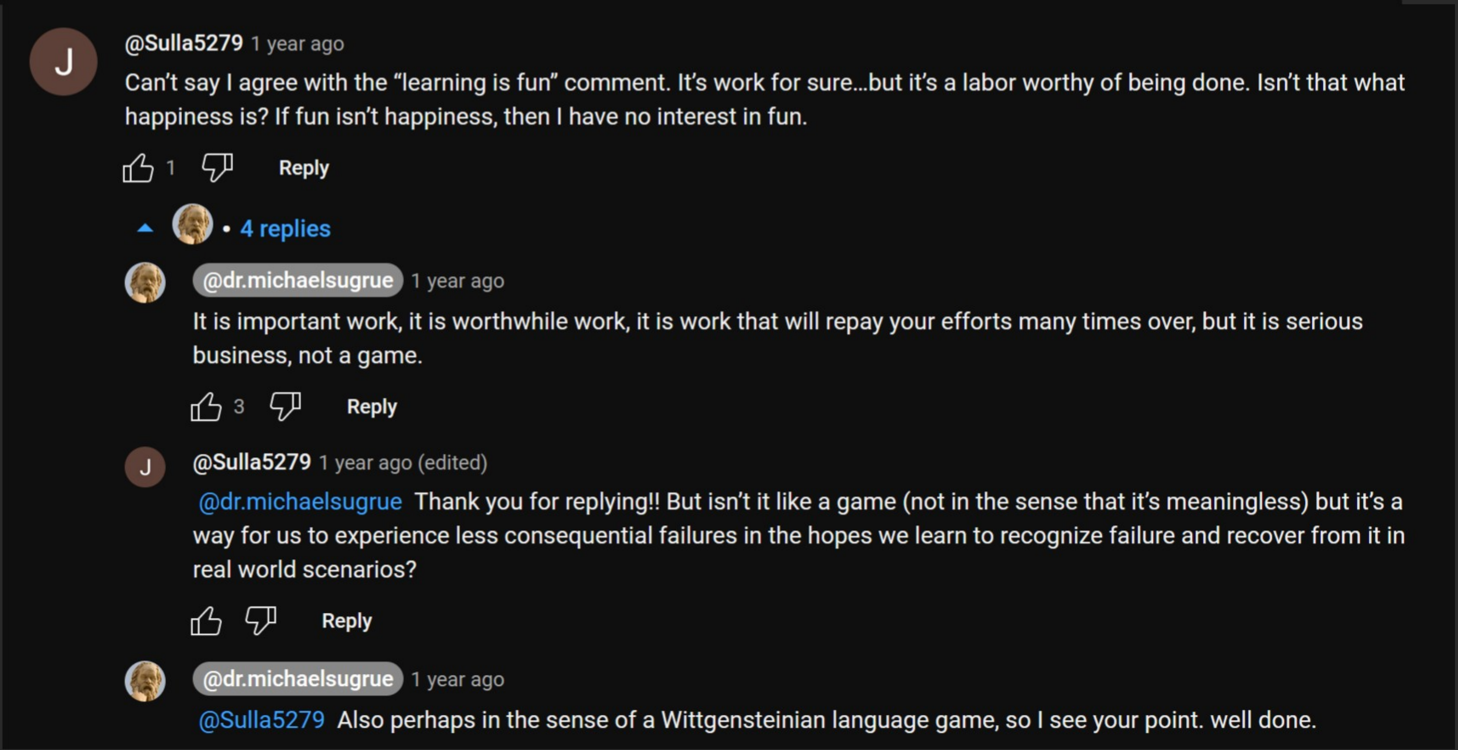


@random-makeings 1 year ago

I'm not a religious person but if I was, I'd like to have this kind of view on my faith and it's uses.
Shear genius.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Leonard Cohen was a contemporary prophet like Ezekiel or Jeremiah, peace be upon him. His facility with Christianity was exemplary because he understood how to deploy it as a language. His haunting apocalyptic songs like "The Future" or You want it darker?" or "Hallelujah" exhibit a facility with Christianity as a system of symbols that I have hoped (unsuccessfully) to achieve with every religious language. My first language is Christianity but I have a near native fluency in Platonism, a limited command of Judaism and Islam, and a still more attenuated grasp of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and several others, so I speak a strange patois. It is valuable to speak at least one religious language and it is better to speak more, but it is regrettable not to speak any. God gave you eyes but you choose to open them or not. I wish you well.



@Sulla5279 1 year ago

Can't say I agree with the "learning is fun" comment. It's work for sure...but it's a labor worthy of being done. Isn't that what happiness is? If fun isn't happiness, then I have no interest in fun.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

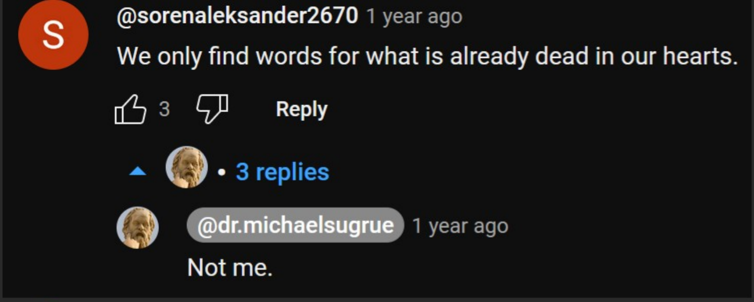
It is important work, it is worthwhile work, it is work that will repay your efforts many times over, but it is serious business, not a game.

@Sulla5279 1 year ago (edited)

@dr.michaelsugrue Thank you for replying!! But isn't it like a game (not in the sense that it's meaningless) but it's a way for us to experience less consequential failures in the hopes we learn to recognize failure and recover from it in real world scenarios?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@Sulla5279 Also perhaps in the sense of a Wittgensteinian language game, so I see your point. well done.

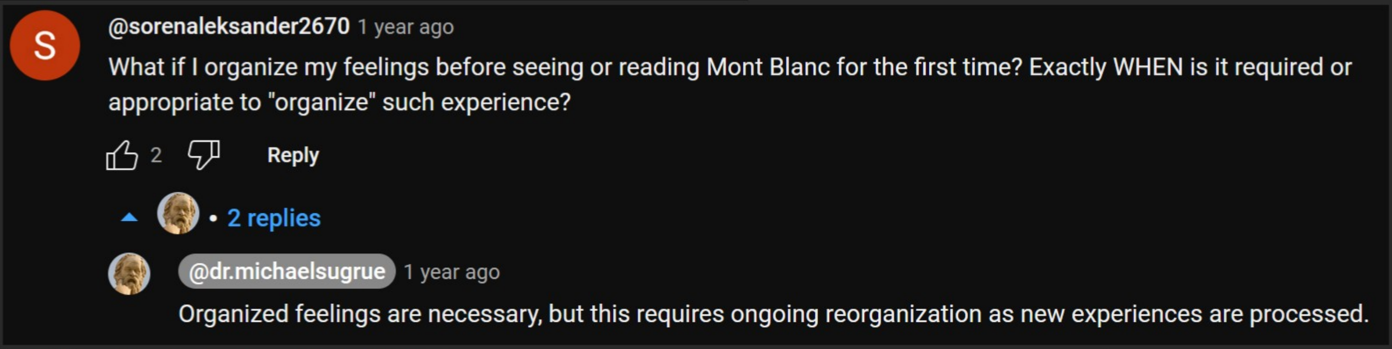


@sorenaleksander2670 1 year ago

We only find words for what is already dead in our hearts.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Not me.

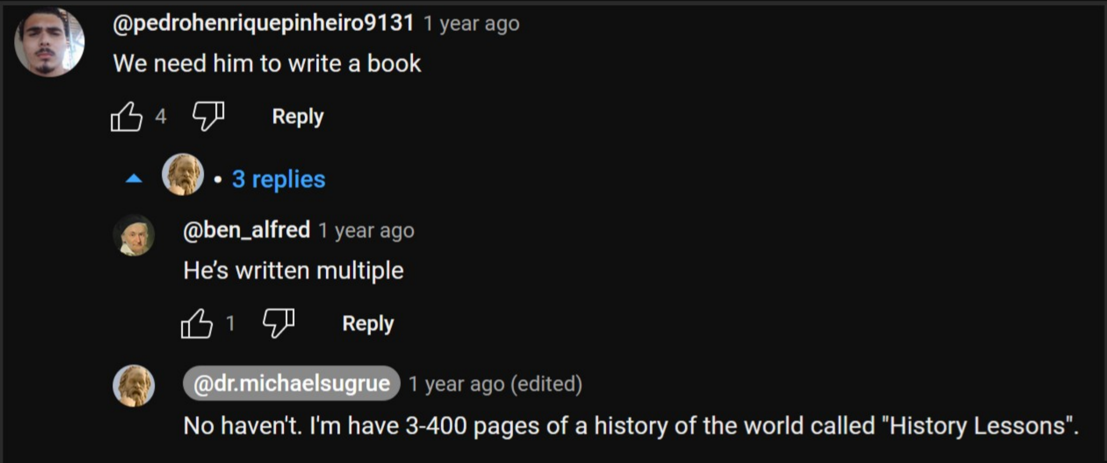


@sorenaleksander2670 1 year ago

What if I organize my feelings before seeing or reading Mont Blanc for the first time? Exactly WHEN is it required or appropriate to "organize" such experience?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Organized feelings are necessary, but this requires ongoing reorganization as new experiences are processed.



@pedrohenriquepinheiro9131 1 year ago

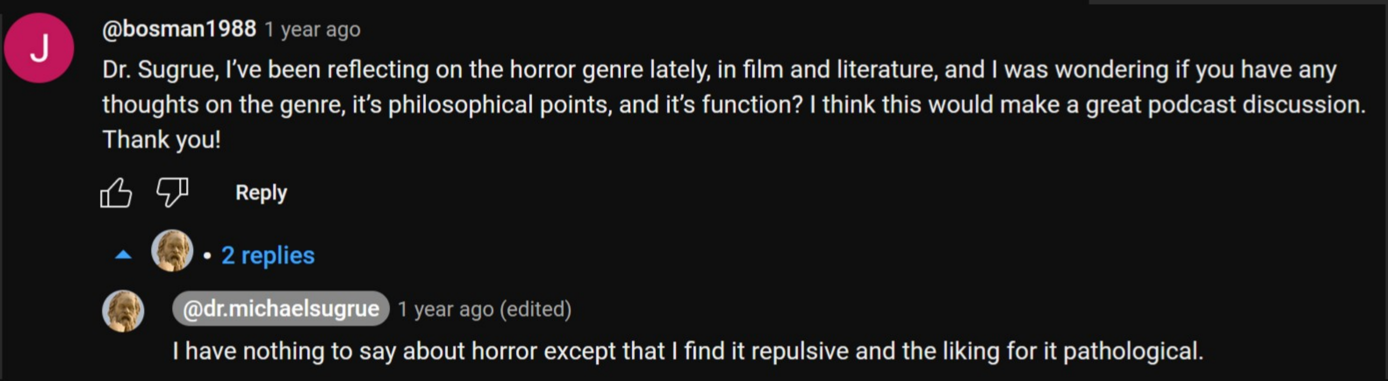
We need him to write a book

@ben_alfred 1 year ago

He's written multiple

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

No haven't. I'm have 3-400 pages of a history of the world called "History Lessons".

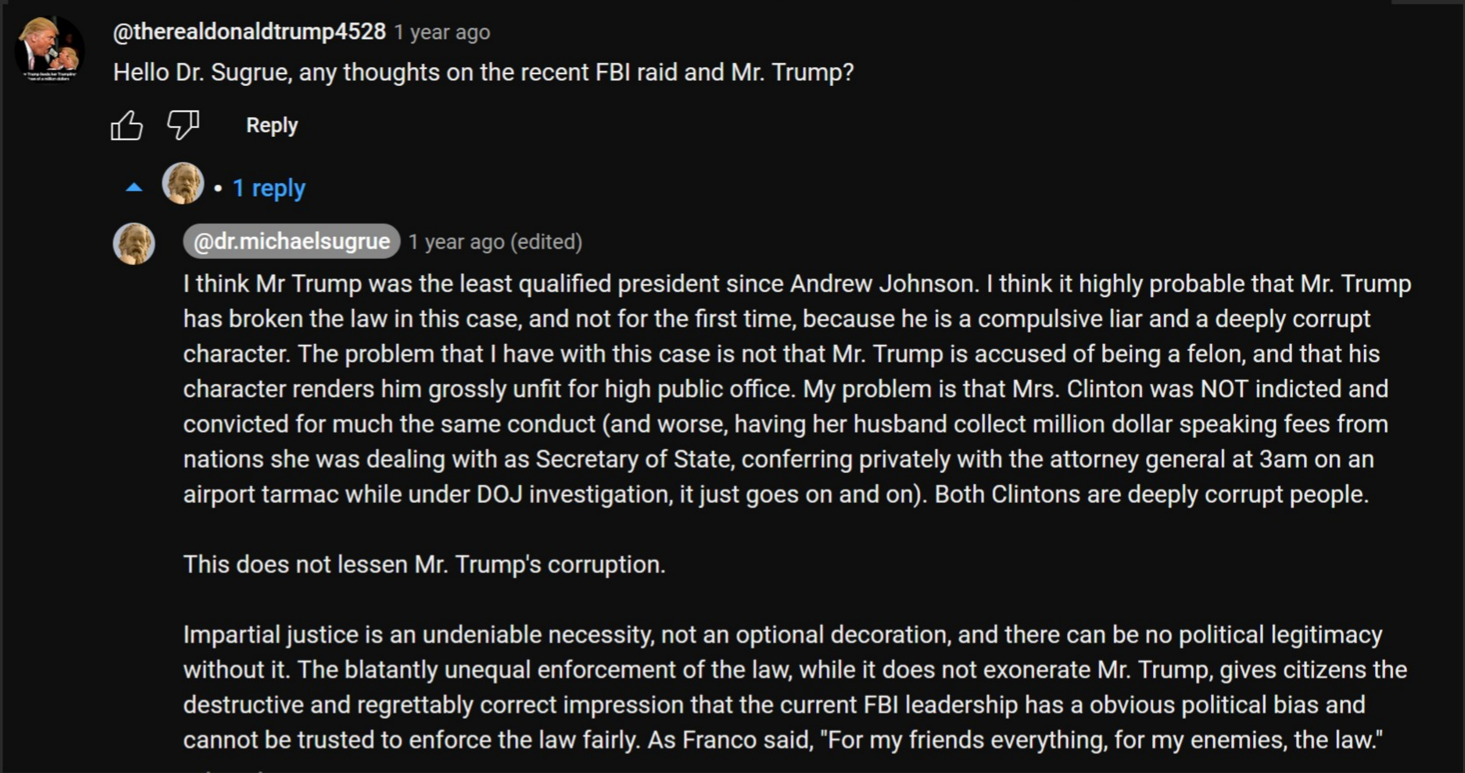


@bosman1988 1 year ago

Dr. Sugrue, I've been reflecting on the horror genre lately, in film and literature, and I was wondering if you have any thoughts on the genre, it's philosophical points, and it's function? I think this would make a great podcast discussion. Thank you!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I have nothing to say about horror except that I find it repulsive and the liking for it pathological.



@therealdonaldtrump4528 1 year ago

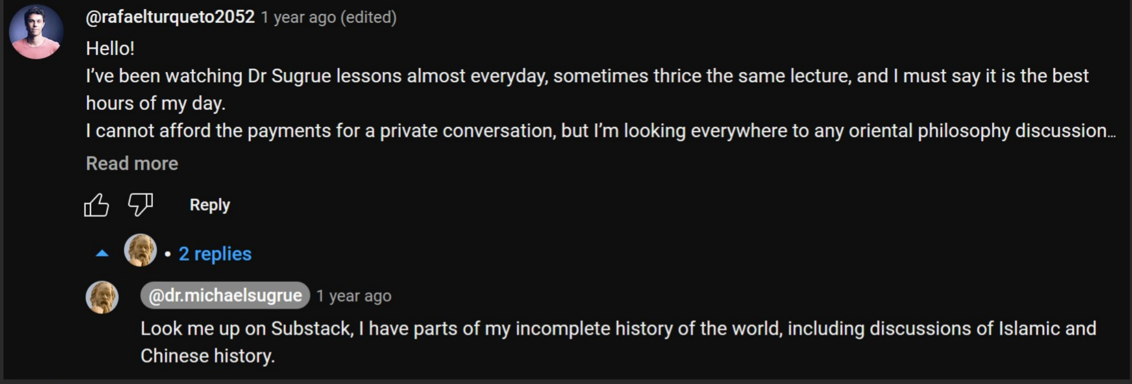
Hello Dr. Sugrue, any thoughts on the recent FBI raid and Mr. Trump?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I think Mr Trump was the least qualified president since Andrew Johnson. I think it highly probable that Mr. Trump has broken the law in this case, and not for the first time, because he is a compulsive liar and a deeply corrupt character. The problem that I have with this case is not that Mr. Trump is accused of being a felon, and that his character renders him grossly unfit for high public office. My problem is that Mrs. Clinton was NOT indicted and convicted for much the same conduct (and worse, having her husband collect million dollar speaking fees from nations she was dealing with as Secretary of State, conferring privately with the attorney general at 3am on an airport tarmac while under DOJ investigation, it just goes on and on). Both Clintons are deeply corrupt people.

This does not lessen Mr. Trump's corruption.

Impartial justice is an undeniable necessity, not an optional decoration, and there can be no political legitimacy without it. The blatantly unequal enforcement of the law, while it does not exonerate Mr. Trump, gives citizens the destructive and regrettably correct impression that the current FBI leadership has a obvious political bias and cannot be trusted to enforce the law fairly. As Franco said, "For my friends everything, for my enemies, the law."

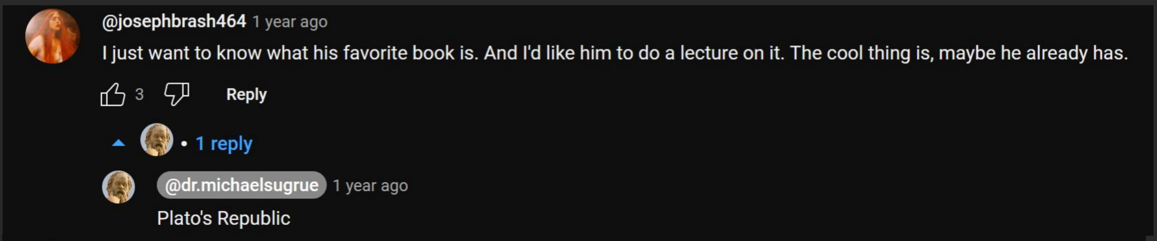


@rafaelturqueto2052 1 year ago (edited)

Hello!
I've been watching Dr Sugrue lessons almost everyday, sometimes thrice the same lecture, and I must say it is the best hours of my day.
I cannot afford the payments for a private conversation, but I'm looking everywhere to any oriental philosophy discussion…

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Look me up on Substack, I have parts of my incomplete history of the world, including discussions of Islamic and Chinese history.

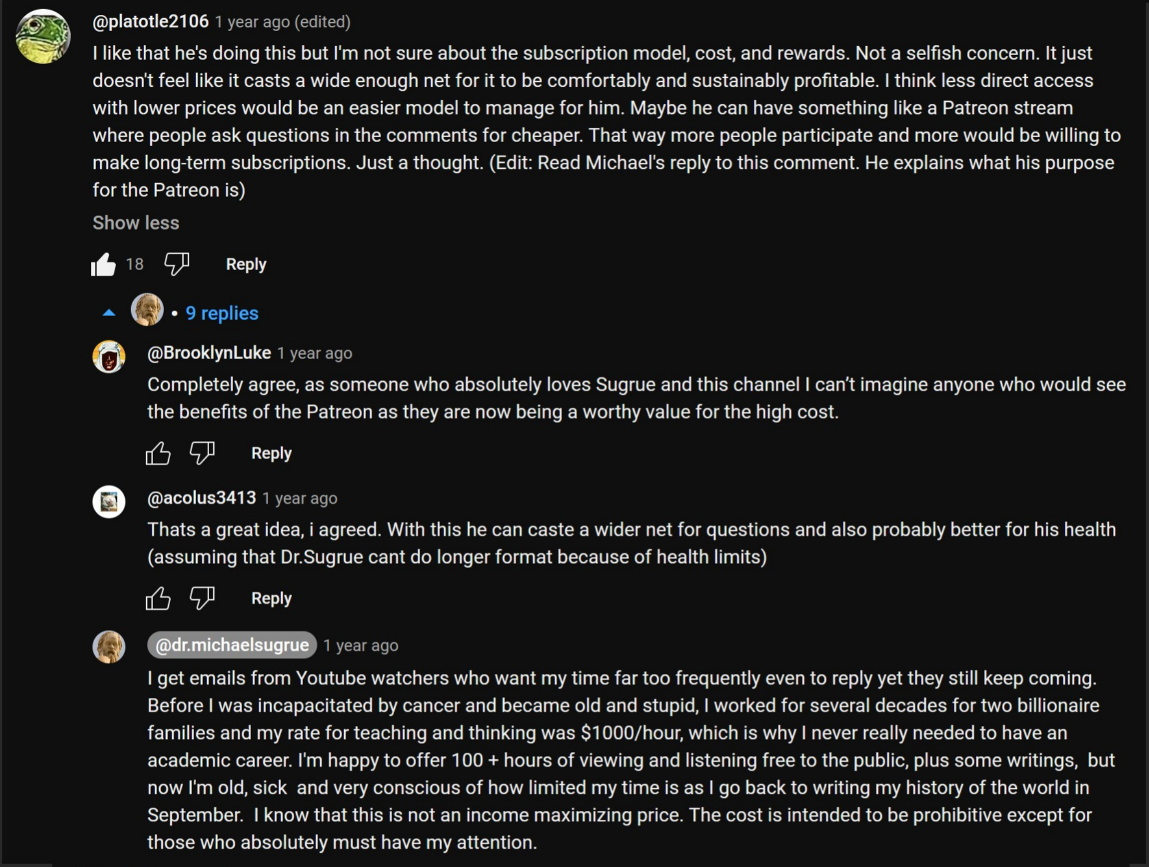


@josephbrash464 1 year ago

I just want to know what his favorite book is. And I'd like him to do a lecture on it. The cool thing is, maybe he already has.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Plato's Republic



@platotle2106 1 year ago (edited)

I like that he's doing this but I'm not sure about the subscription model, cost, and rewards. Not a selfish concern. It just doesn't feel like it casts a wide enough net for it to be comfortably and sustainably profitable. I think less direct access with lower prices would be an easier model to manage for him. Maybe he can have something like a Patreon stream where people ask questions in the comments for cheaper. That way more people participate and more would be willing to make long-term subscriptions. Just a thought. (Edit: Read Michael's reply to this comment. He explains what his purpose for the Patreon is)

@BrooklynLuke 1 year ago

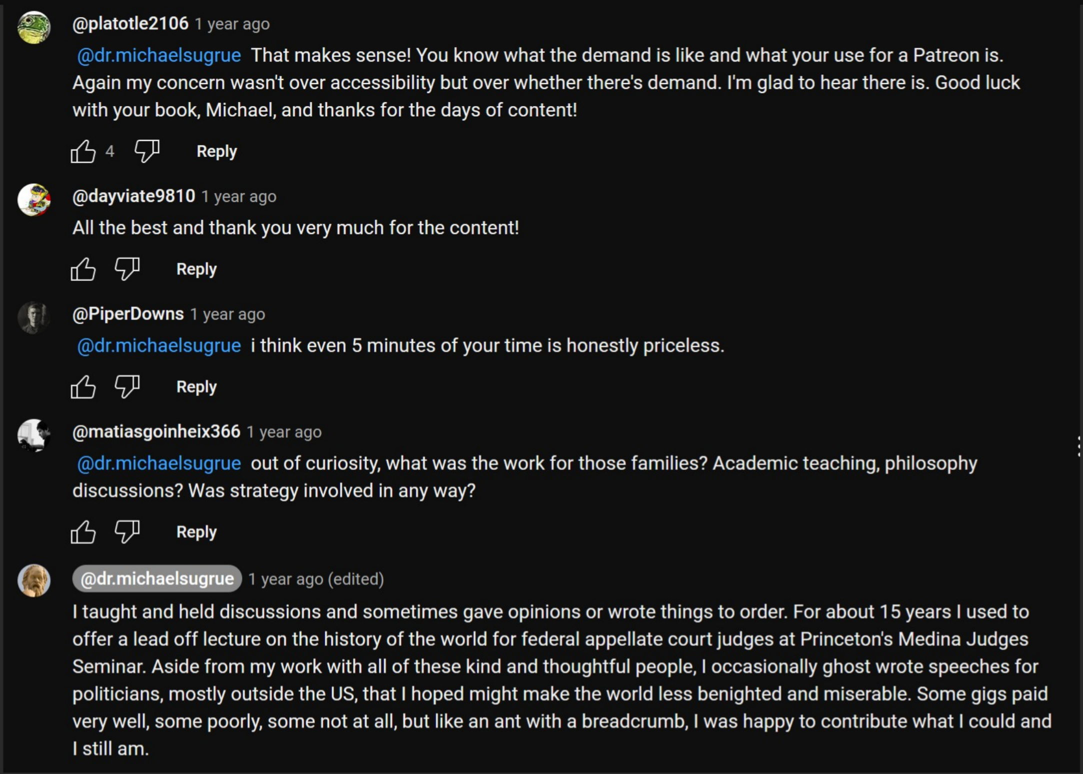
Completely agree, as someone who absolutely loves Sugrue and this channel I can't imagine anyone who would see the benefits of the Patreon as they are now being a worthy value for the high cost.

@acolus3413 1 year ago

Thats a great idea, i agreed. With this he can caste a wider net for questions and also probably better for his health (assuming that Dr.Sugrue cant do longer format because of health limits)

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I get emails from Youtube watchers who want my time far too frequently even to reply yet they still keep coming. Before I was incapacitated by cancer and became old and stupid, I worked for several decades for two billionaire families and my rate for teaching and thinking was $1000/hour, which is why I never really needed to have an academic career. I'm happy to offer 100 + hours of viewing and listening free to the public, plus some writings, but now I'm old, sick and very conscious of how limited my time is as I go back to writing my history of the world in September. I know that this is not an income maximizing price. The cost is intended to be prohibitive except for those who absolutely must have my attention.



@platotle2106 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue That makes sense! You know what the demand is like and what your use for a Patreon is. Again my concern wasn't over accessibility but over whether there's demand. I'm glad to hear there is. Good luck with your book, Michael, and thanks for the days of content!

@dayviate9810 1 year ago

All the best and thank you very much for the content!

@PiperDowns 1 year ago

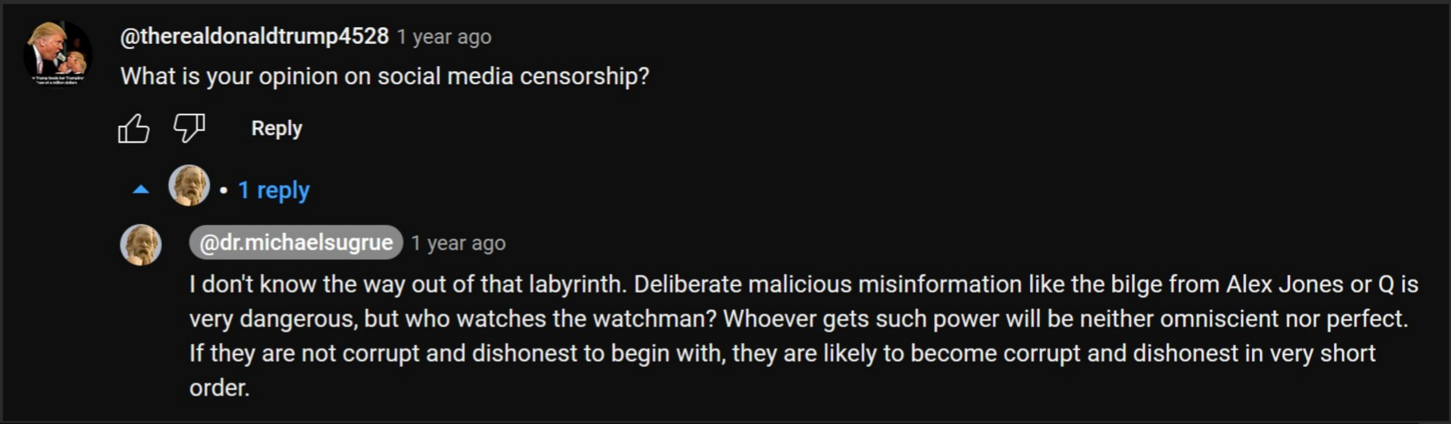
@dr.michaelsugrue i think even 5 minutes of your time is honestly priceless.

@matiasgoinheix366 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue out of curiosity, what was the work for those families? Academic teaching, philosophy discussions? Was strategy involved in any way?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I taught and held discussions and sometimes gave opinions or wrote things to order. For about 15 years I used to offer a lead off lecture on the history of the world for federal appellate court judges at Princeton's Medina Judges Seminar. Aside from my work with all of these kind and thoughtful people, I occasionally ghost wrote speeches for politicians, mostly outside the US, that I hoped might make the world less benighted and miserable. Some gigs paid very well, some poorly, some not at all, but like an ant with a breadcrumb, I was happy to contribute what I could and I still am.

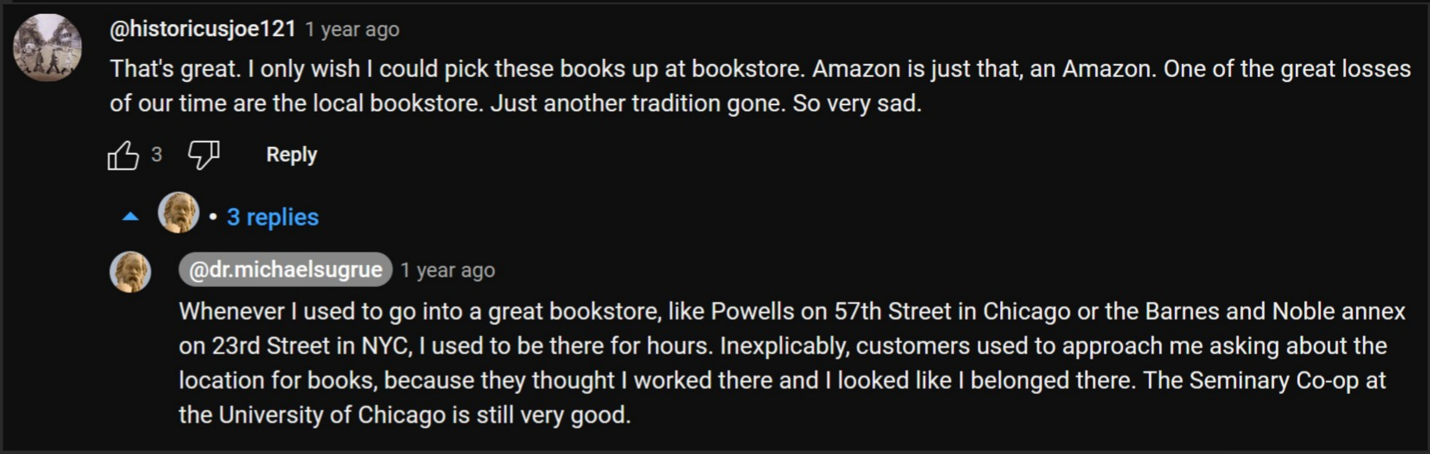


@therealdonaldtrump4528 1 year ago

What is your opinion on social media censorship?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I don't know the way out of that labyrinth. Deliberate malicious misinformation like the bilge from Alex Jones or Q is very dangerous, but who watches the watchman? Whoever gets such power will be neither omniscient nor perfect. If they are not corrupt and dishonest to begin with, they are likely to become corrupt and dishonest in very short order.

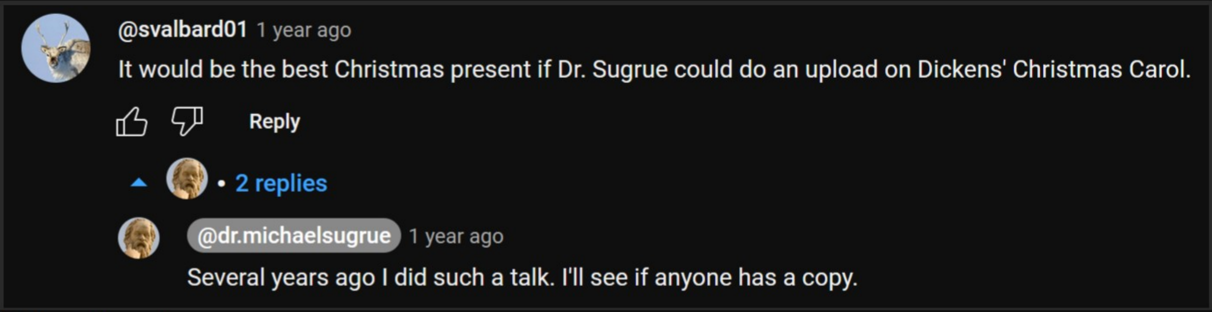


@historicusjoe121 1 year ago

That's great. I only wish I could pick these books up at bookstore. Amazon is just that, an Amazon. One of the great losses of our time are the local bookstore. Just another tradition gone. So very sad.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Whenever I used to go into a great bookstore, like Powells on 57th Street in Chicago or the Barnes and Noble annex on 23rd Street in NYC, I used to be there for hours. Inexplicably, customers used to approach me asking about the location for books, because they thought I worked there and I looked like I belonged there. The Seminary Co-op at the University of Chicago is still very good.

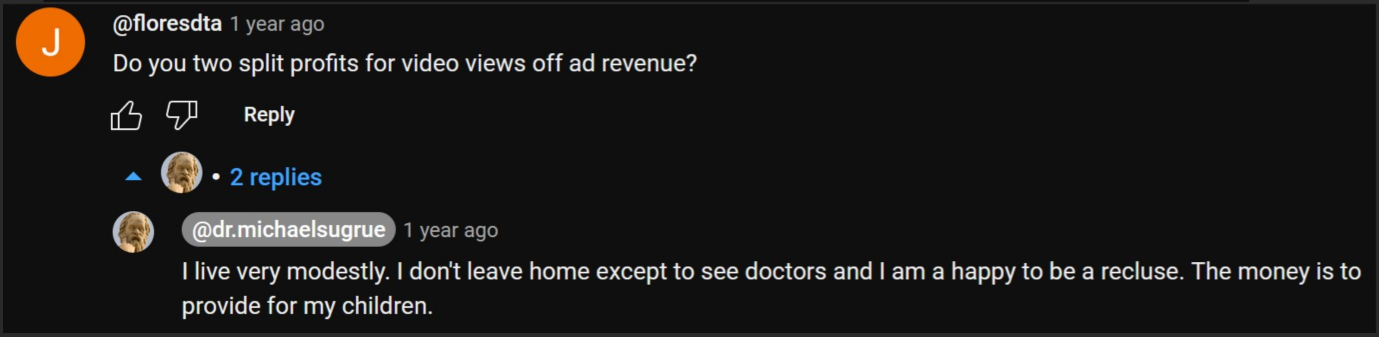


@svalbard01 1 year ago

It would be the best Christmas present if Dr. Sugrue could do an upload on Dickens' Christmas Carol.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Several years ago I did such a talk. I'll see if anyone has a copy.

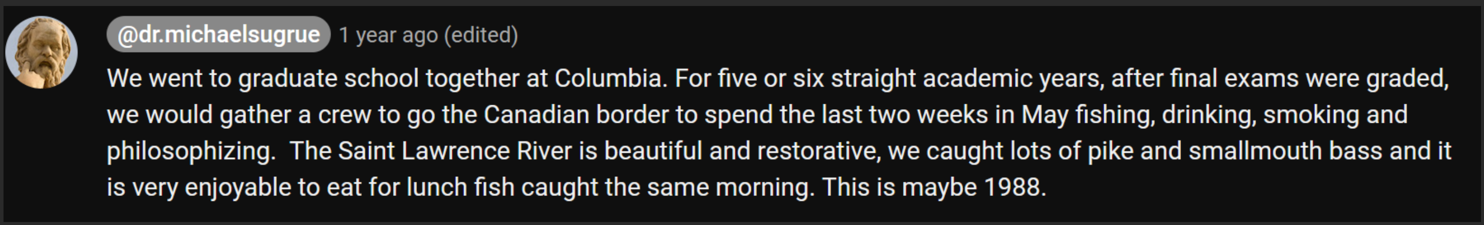


@floresdta 1 year ago

Do you two split profits for video views off ad revenue?

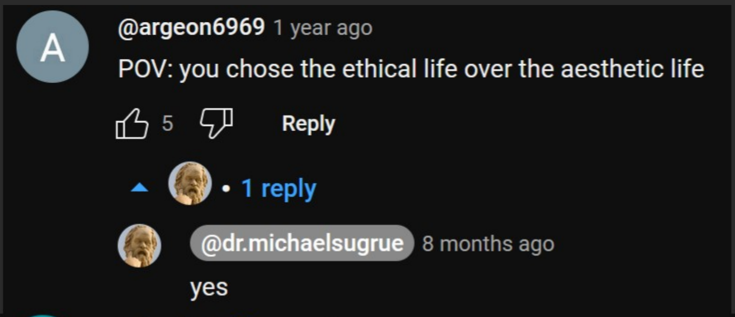
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I live very modestly. I don't leave home except to see doctors and I am a happy to be a recluse. The money is to provide for my children.



@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

We went to graduate school together at Columbia. For five or six straight academic years, after final exams were graded, we would gather a crew to go the Canadian border to spend the last two weeks in May fishing, drinking, smoking and philosophizing. The Saint Lawrence River is beautiful and restorative, we caught lots of pike and smallmouth bass and it is very enjoyable to eat for lunch fish caught the same morning. This is maybe 1988.

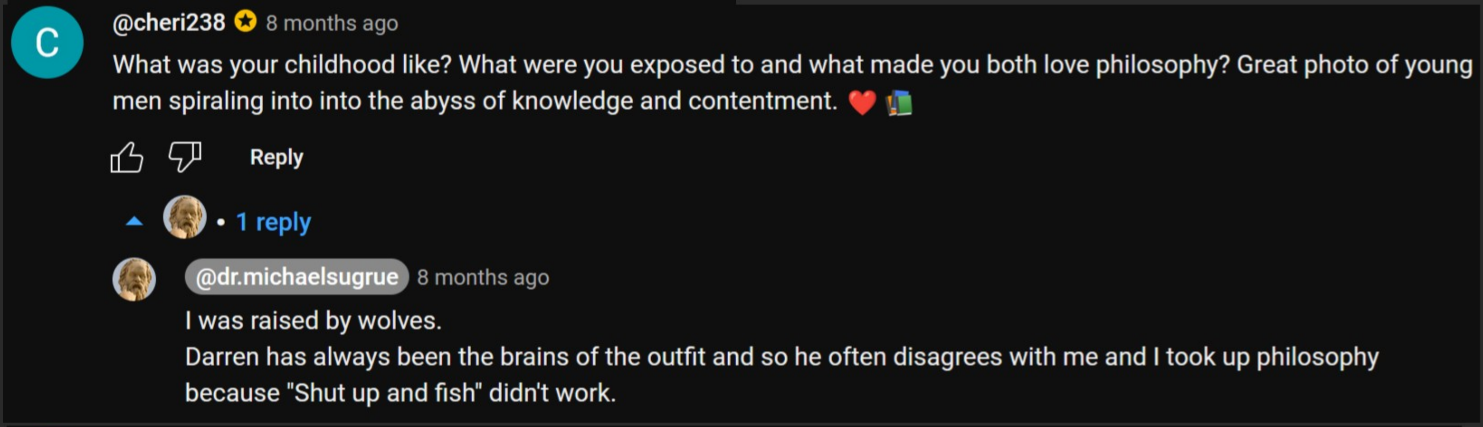


@argeon6969 1 year ago

POV: you chose the ethical life over the aesthetic life

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

yes

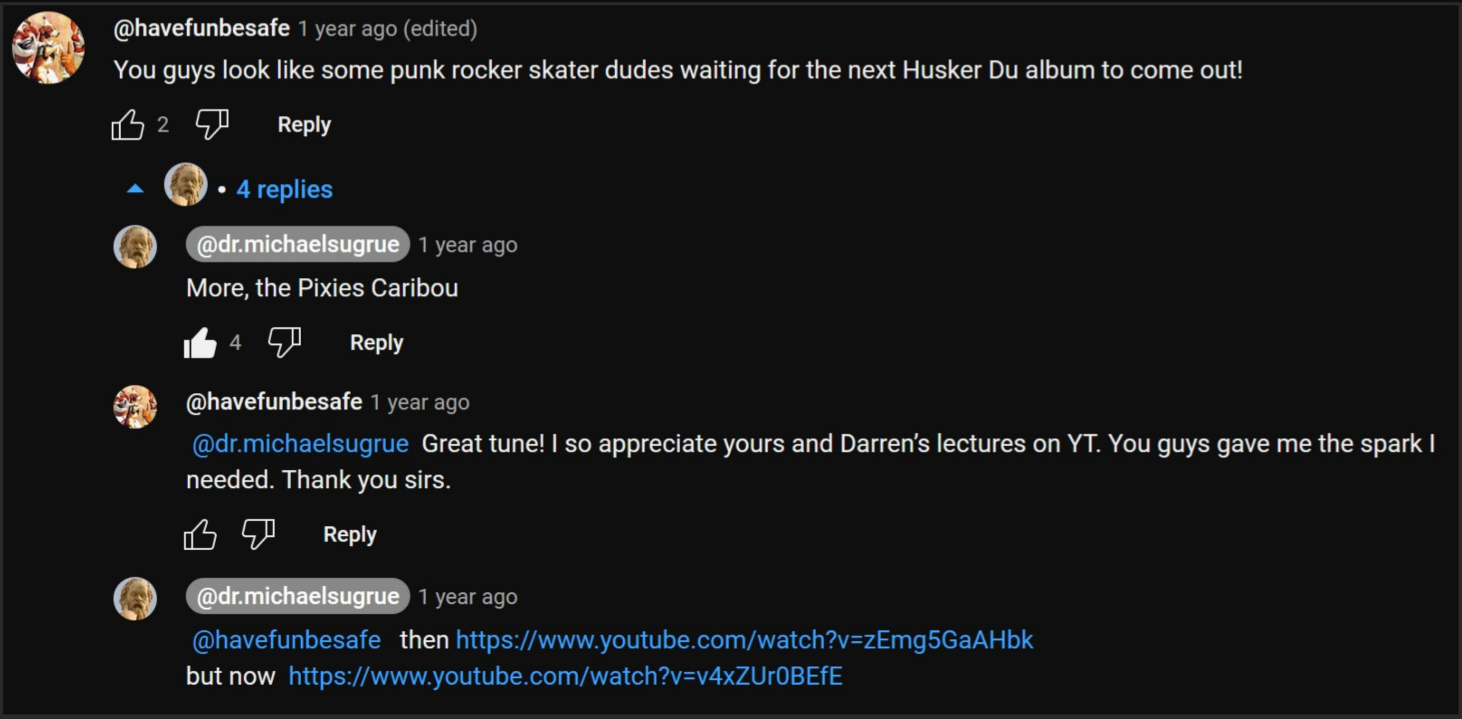


@cheri238 8 months ago

What was your childhood like? What were you exposed to and what made you both love philosophy? Great photo of young men spiraling into into the abyss of knowledge and contentment. ❤️ 📚

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

I was raised by wolves.
Darren has always been the brains of the outfit and so he often disagrees with me and I took up philosophy because "Shut up and fish" didn't work.



@havefunbesafe 1 year ago (edited)

You guys look like some punk rocker skater dudes waiting for the next Husker Du album to come out!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

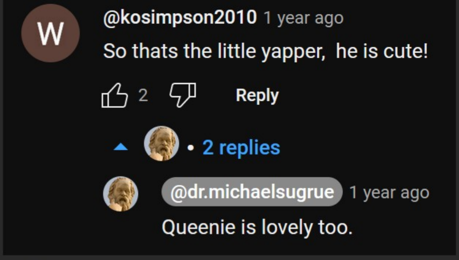
More, the Pixies Caribou

@havefunbesafe 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue Great tune! I so appreciate yours and Darren's lectures on YT. You guys gave me the spark I needed. Thank you sirs.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@havefunbesafe then https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEmg5GaAHbk
but now https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4xZUr0BEfE

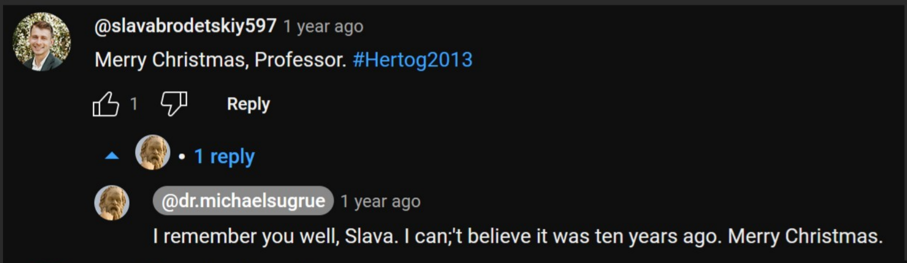


@kosimpson2010 1 year ago

So thats the little yapper, he is cute!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Queenie is lovely too.

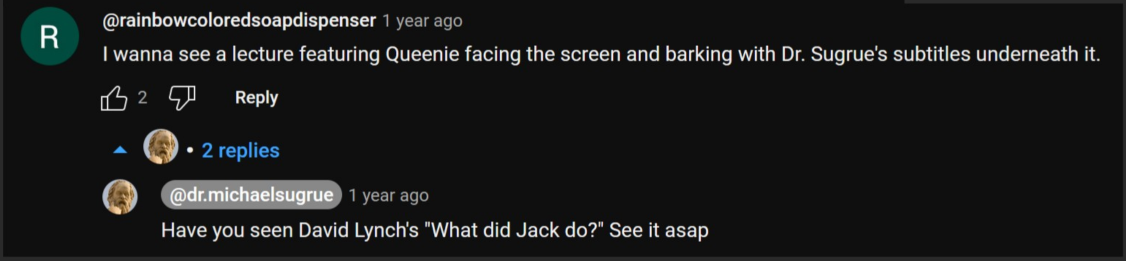


@slavabrodetskiy597 1 year ago

Merry Christmas, Professor. #Hertog2013

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I remember you well, Slava. I can;'t believe it was ten years ago. Merry Christmas.

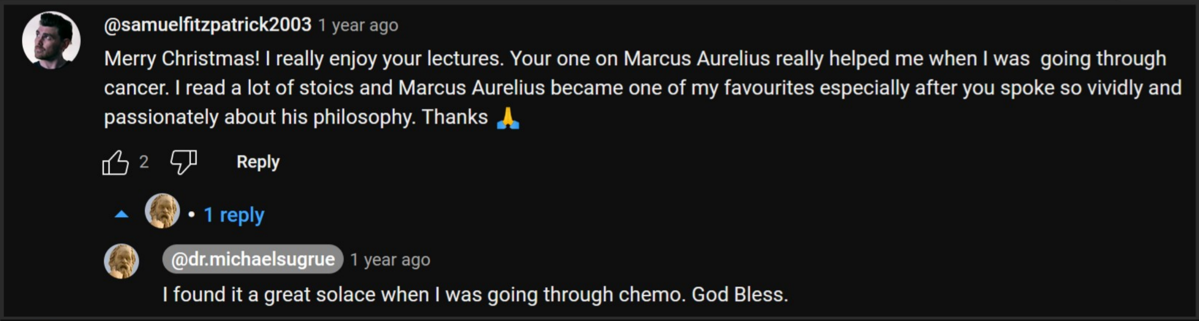


@rainbowcoloredsoapdispenser 1 year ago

I wanna see a lecture featuring Queenie facing the screen and barking with Dr. Sugrue's subtitles underneath it.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Have you seen David Lynch's "What did Jack do?" See it asap

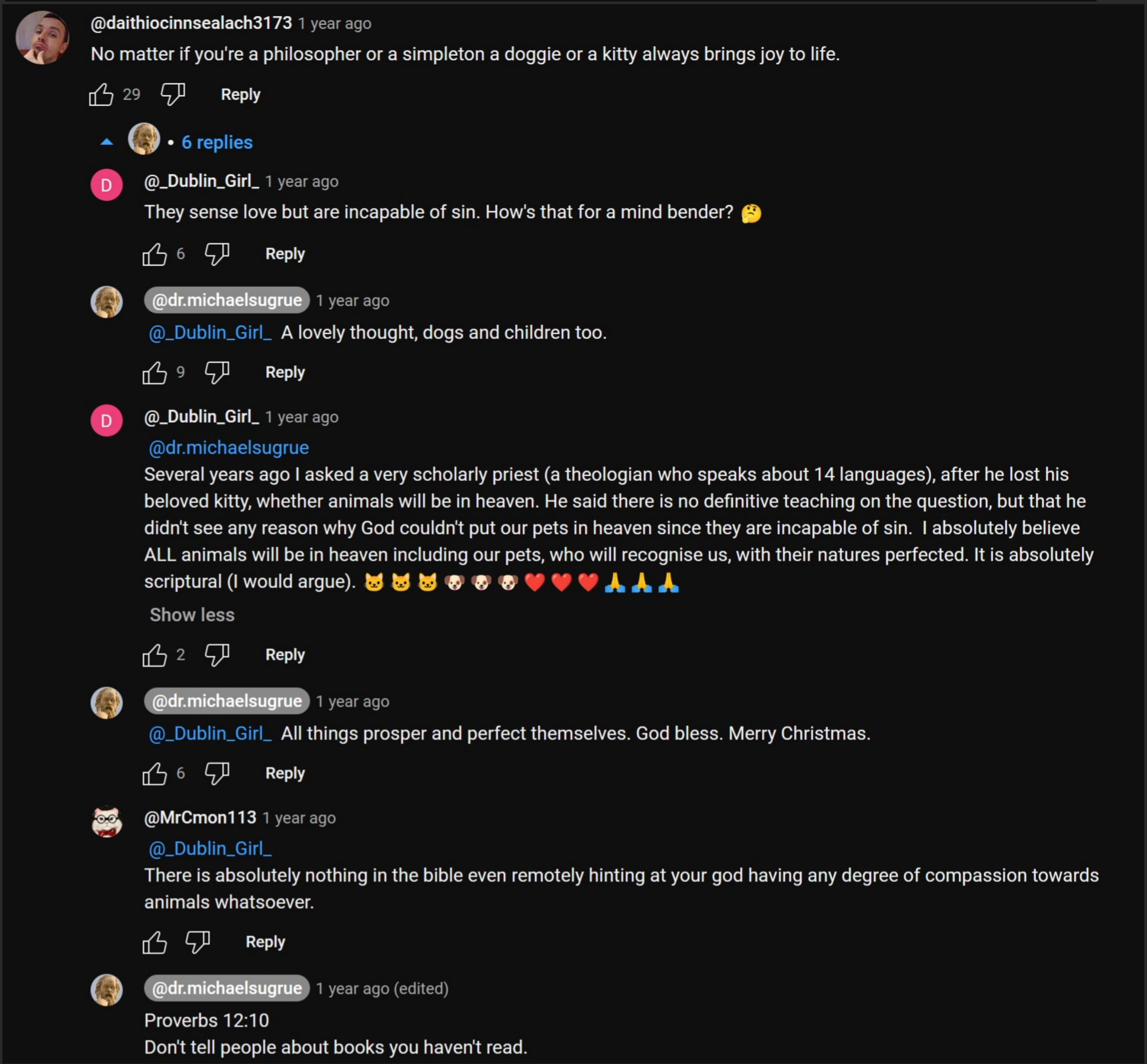


@samuelfitzpatrick2003 1 year ago

Merry Christmas! I really enjoy your lectures. Your one on Marcus Aurelius really helped me when I was going through cancer. I read a lot of stoics and Marcus Aurelius became one of my favourites especially after you spoke so vividly and passionately about his philosophy. Thanks 🙏

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

I found it a great solace when I was going through chemo. God Bless.



@daithiocinnsealach3173 1 year ago

No matter if you're a philosopher or a simpleton a doggie or a kitty always brings joy to life.

@_Dublin_Girl_ 1 year ago

They sense love but are incapable of sin. How's that for a mind bender? 🤔

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@_Dublin_Girl_ A lovely thought, dogs and children too.

@_Dublin_Girl_ 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue

Several years ago I asked a very scholarly priest (a theologian who speaks about 14 languages), after he lost his beloved kitty, whether animals will be in heaven. He said there is no definitive teaching on the question, but that he didn't see any reason why God couldn't put our pets in heaven since they are incapable of sin. I absolutely believe ALL animals will be in heaven including our pets, who will recognise us, with their natures perfected. It is absolutely scriptural (I would argue). 🐱🐱🐱🐶🐶🐶❤️❤️❤️🙏🙏🙏

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

@_Dublin_Girl_ All things prosper and perfect themselves. God bless. Merry Christmas.

@MrCmon113 1 year ago

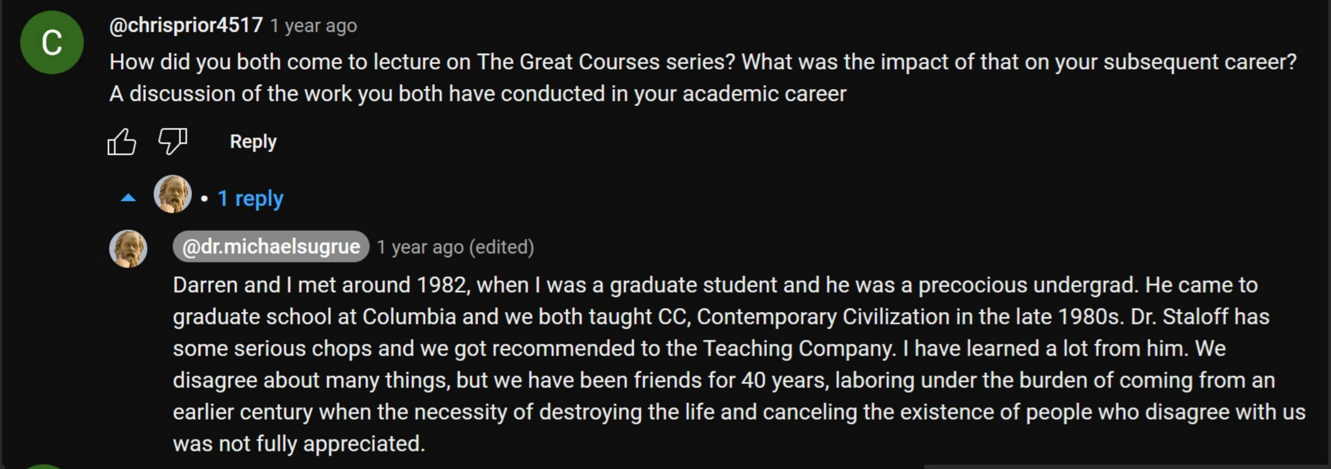
@_Dublin_Girl_

There is absolutely nothing in the bible even remotely hinting at your god having any degree of compassion towards animals whatsoever.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Proverbs 12:10

Don't tell people about books you haven't read.

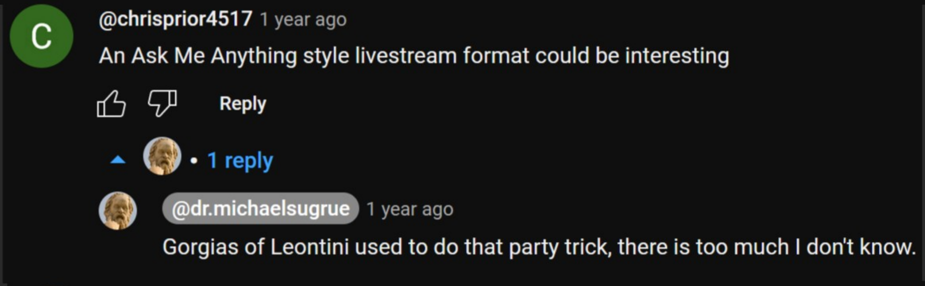


@chrisprior4517 1 year ago

How did you both come to lecture on The Great Courses series? What was the impact of that on your subsequent career? A discussion of the work you both have conducted in your academic career

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

Darren and I met around 1982, when I was a graduate student and he was a precocious undergrad. He came to graduate school at Columbia and we both taught CC, Contemporary Civilization in the late 1980s. Dr. Staloff has some serious chops and we got recommended to the Teaching Company. I have learned a lot from him. We disagree about many things, but we have been friends for 40 years, laboring under the burden of coming from an earlier century when the necessity of destroying the life and canceling the existence of people who disagree with us was not fully appreciated.

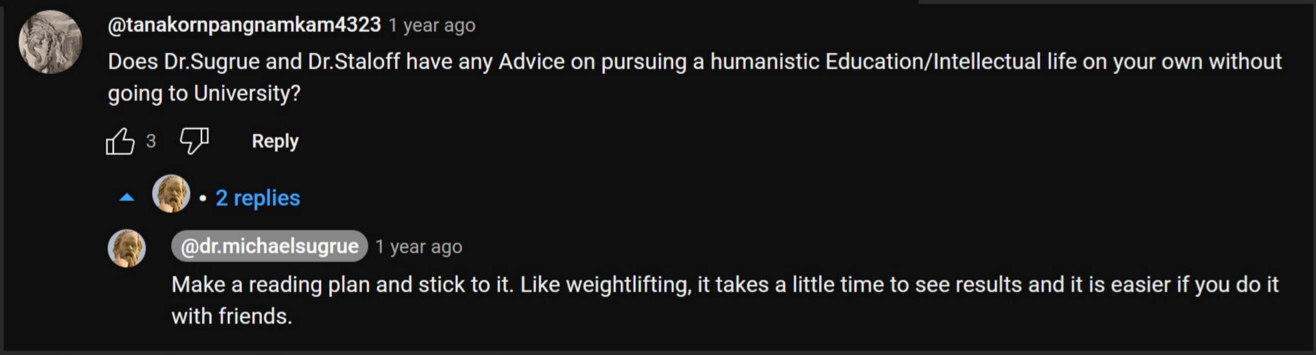


@chrisprior4517 1 year ago

An Ask Me Anything style livestream format could be interesting

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Gorgias of Leontini used to do that party trick, there is too much I don't know.

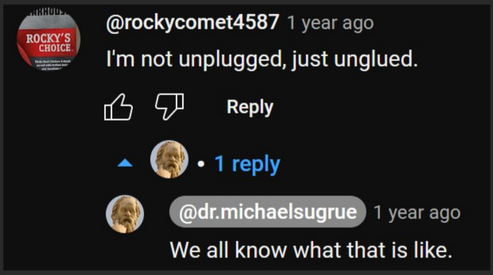


@tanakornpangnamkam4323 1 year ago

Does Dr.Sugrue and Dr.Staloff have any Advice on pursuing a humanistic Education/Intellectual life on your own without going to University?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Make a reading plan and stick to it. Like weightlifting, it takes a little time to see results and it is easier if you do it with friends.

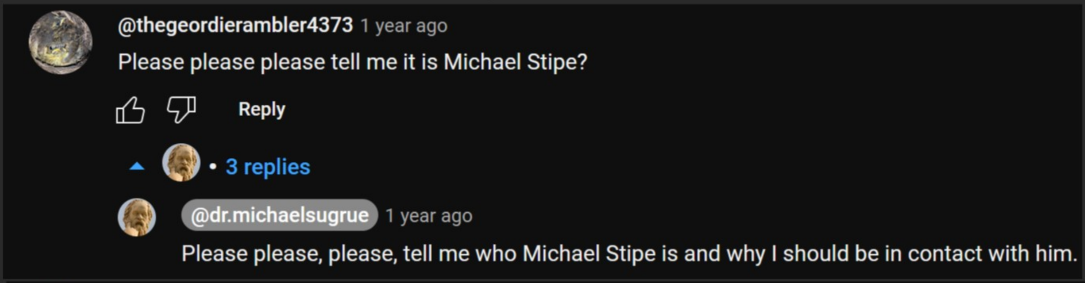


@rockycomet4587 1 year ago

I'm not unplugged, just unglued.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

We all know what that is like.

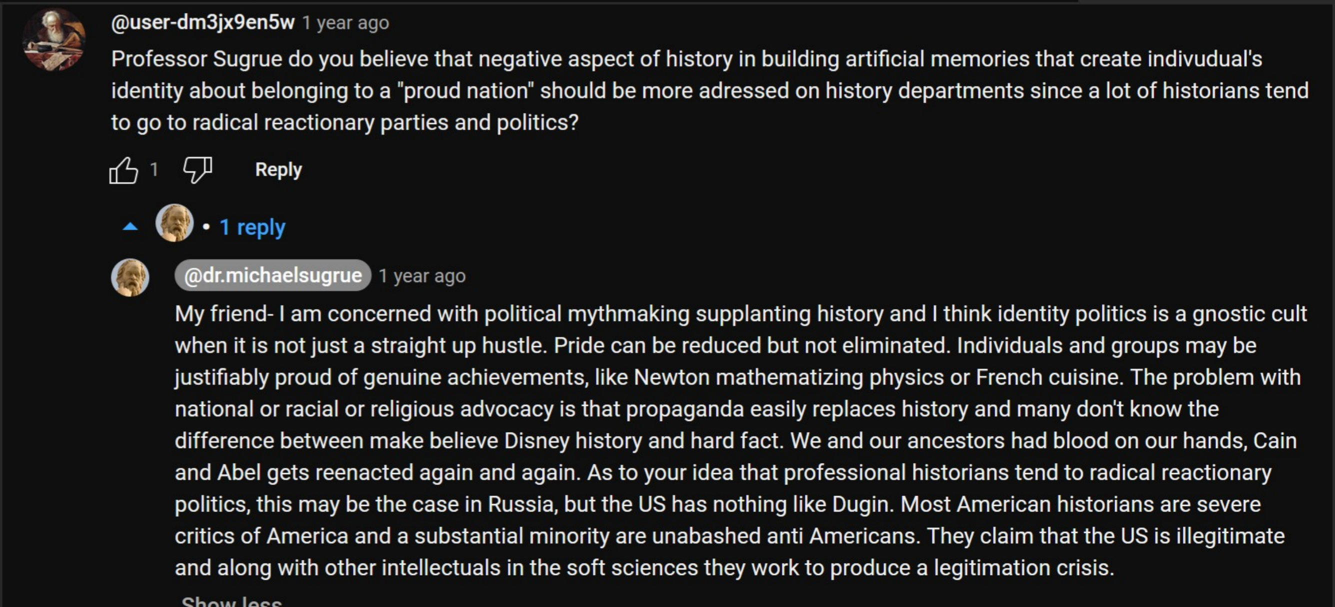


@thegeordierambler4373 1 year ago

Please please please tell me it is Michael Stipe?

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

Please please, please, tell me who Michael Stipe is and why I should be in contact with him.

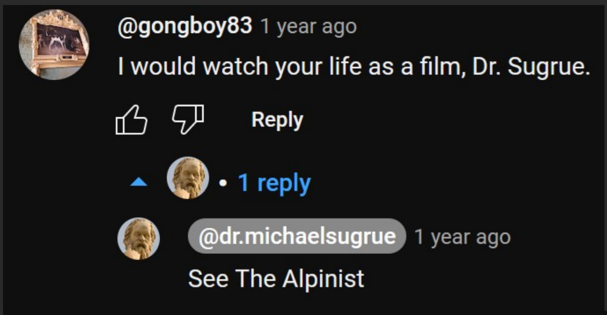


@user-dm3jx9en5w 1 year ago

Professor Sugrue do you believe that negative aspect of history in building artificial memories that create indivudual's identity about belonging to a "proud nation" should be more adressed on history departments since a lot of historians tend to go to radical reactionary parties and politics?

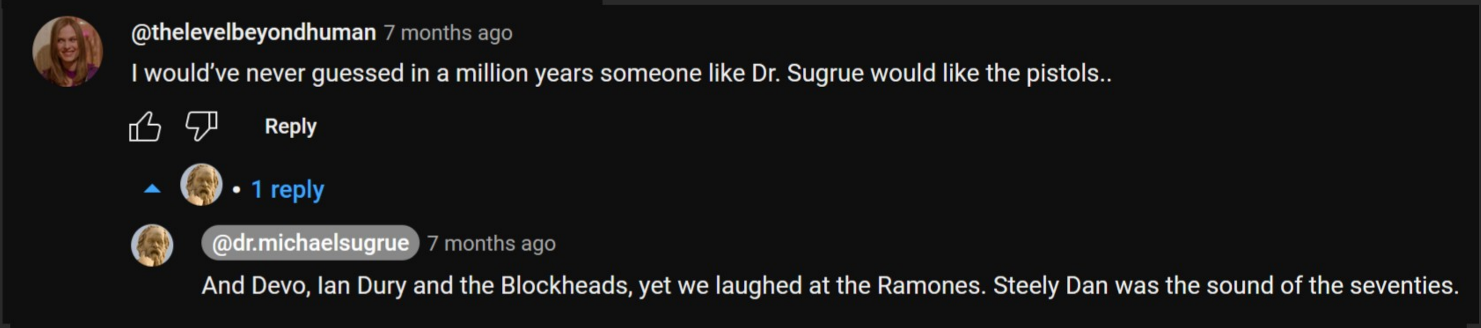
@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago

My friend- I am concerned with political mythmaking supplanting history and I think identity politics is a gnostic cult when it is not just a straight up hustle. Pride can be reduced but not eliminated. Individuals and groups may be justifiably proud of genuine achievements, like Newton mathematizing physics or French cuisine. The problem with national or racial or religious advocacy is that propaganda easily replaces history and many don't know the difference between make believe Disney history and hard fact. We and our ancestors had blood on our hands, Cain and Abel gets reenacted again and again. As to your idea that professional historians tend to radical reactionary politics, this may be the case in Russia, but the US has nothing like Dugin. Most American historians are severe critics of America and a substantial minority are unabashed anti Americans. They claim that the US is illegitimate and along with other intellectuals in the soft sciences they work to produce a legitimation crisis.



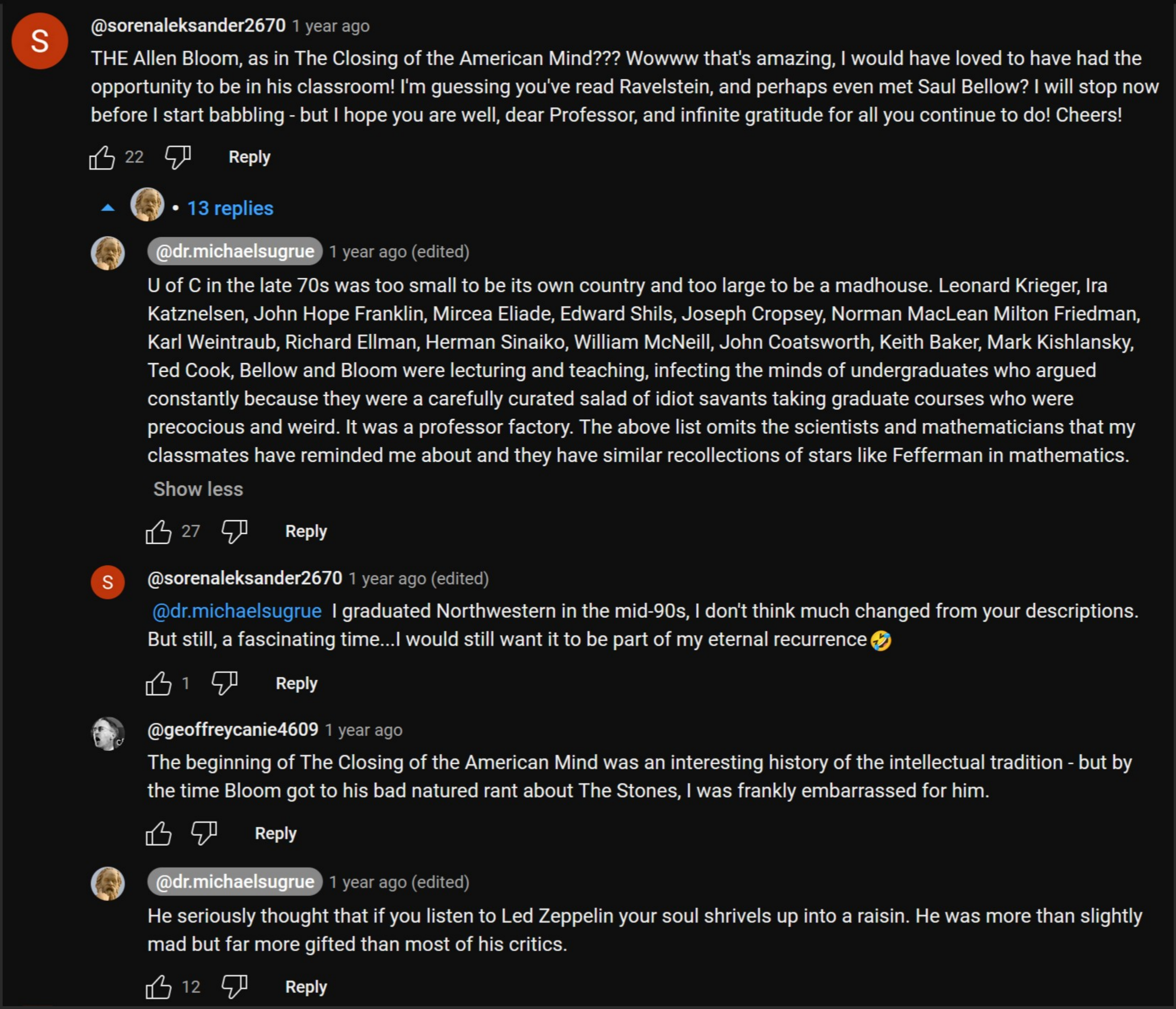
@gongboy83 1 year ago
I would watch your life as a film, Dr. Sugrue.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago
See The Alpinist



@thelevelbeyondhuman 7 months ago
I would've never guessed in a million years someone like Dr. Sugrue would like the pistols..

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago
And Devo, Ian Dury and the Blockheads, yet we laughed at the Ramones. Steely Dan was the sound of the seventies.



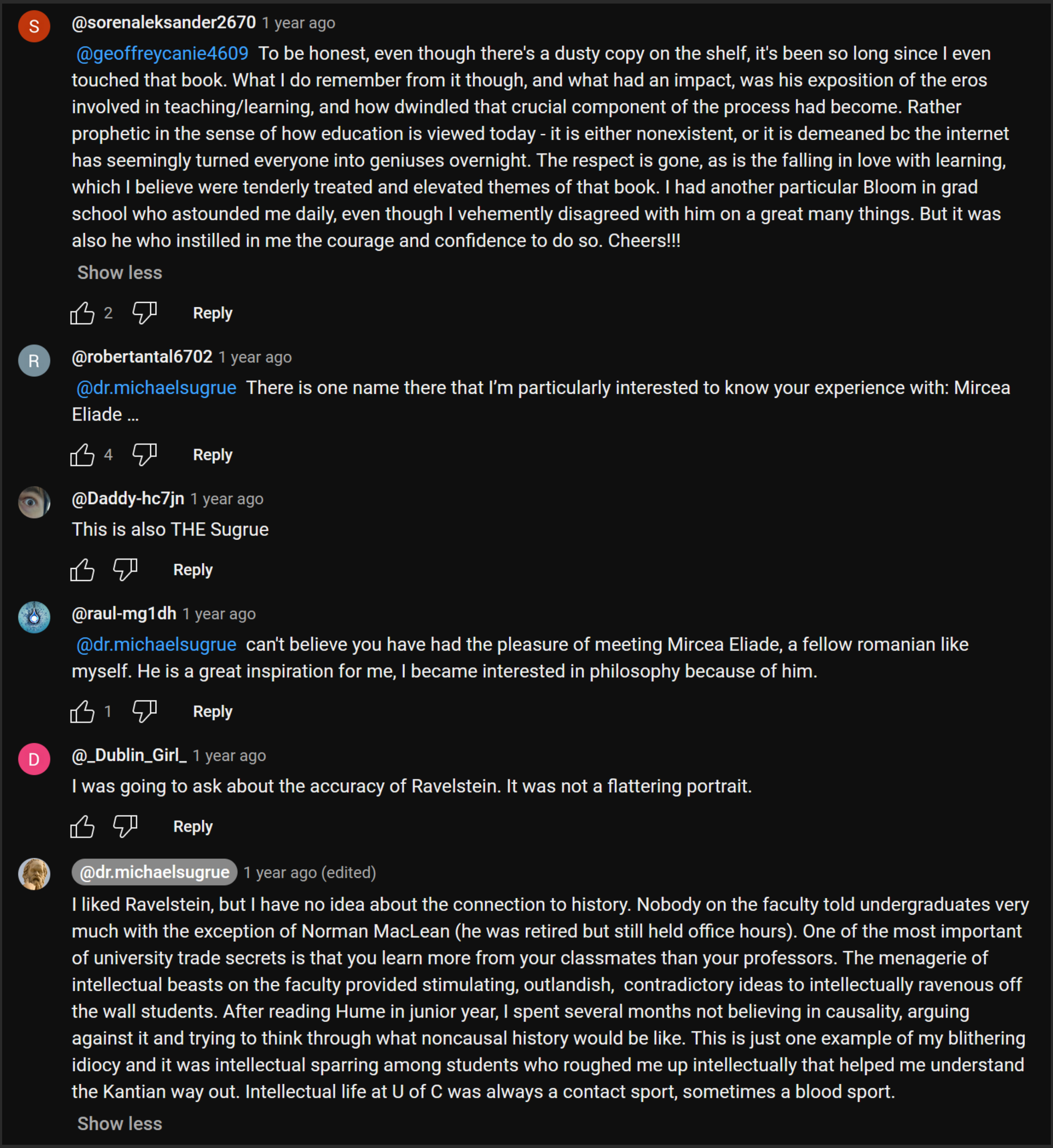
@sorenaleksander2670 1 year ago
THE Allen Bloom, as in The Closing of the American Mind??? Wowww that's amazing, I would have loved to have had the opportunity to be in his classroom! I'm guessing you've read Ravelstein, and perhaps even met Saul Bellow? I will stop now before I start babbling - but I hope you are well, dear Professor, and infinite gratitude for all you continue to do! Cheers!

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
U of C in the late 70s was too small to be its own country and too large to be a madhouse. Leonard Krieger, Ira Katznelsen, John Hope Franklin, Mircea Eliade, Edward Shils, Joseph Cropsey, Norman MacLean Milton Friedman, Karl Weintraub, Richard Ellman, Herman Sinaiko, William McNeill, John Coatsworth, Keith Baker, Mark Kishlansky, Ted Cook, Bellow and Bloom were lecturing and teaching, infecting the minds of undergraduates who argued constantly because they were a carefully curated salad of idiot savants taking graduate courses who were precocious and weird. It was a professor factory. The above list omits the scientists and mathematicians that my classmates have reminded me about and they have similar recollections of stars like Fefferman in mathematics.

@sorenaleksander2670 1 year ago (edited)
@dr.michaelsugrue I graduated Northwestern in the mid-90s, I don't think much changed from your descriptions. But still, a fascinating time...I would still want it to be part of my eternal recurrence🤣

@geoffreycanie4609 1 year ago
The beginning of The Closing of the American Mind was an interesting history of the intellectual tradition - but by the time Bloom got to his bad natured rant about The Stones, I was frankly embarrassed for him.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)
He seriously thought that if you listen to Led Zeppelin your soul shrivels up into a raisin. He was more than slightly mad but far more gifted than most of his critics.



@sorenaleksander2670 1 year ago

@geoffreycanie4609 To be honest, even though there's a dusty copy on the shelf, it's been so long since I even touched that book. What I do remember from it though, and what had an impact, was his exposition of the eros involved in teaching/learning, and how dwindled that crucial component of the process had become. Rather prophetic in the sense of how education is viewed today - it is either nonexistent, or it is demeaned bc the internet has seemingly turned everyone into geniuses overnight. The respect is gone, as is the falling in love with learning, which I believe were tenderly treated and elevated themes of that book. I had another particular Bloom in grad school who astounded me daily, even though I vehemently disagreed with him on a great many things. But it was also he who instilled in me the courage and confidence to do so. Cheers!!!

@robertantal6702 1 year ago

@dr.michaelsugrue There is one name there that I'm particularly interested to know your experience with: Mircea Eliade ...

@Daddy-hc7jn 1 year ago

This is also THE Sugrue

@raul-mg1dh 1 year ago

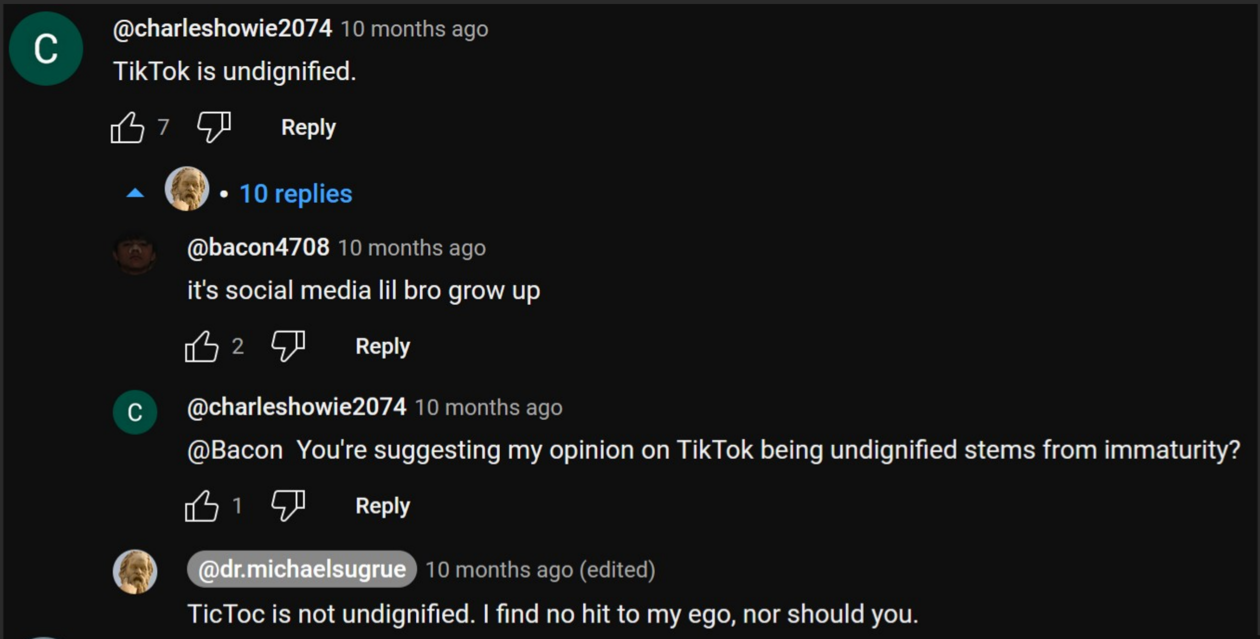
@dr.michaelsugrue can't believe you have had the pleasure of meeting Mircea Eliade, a fellow romanian like myself. He is a great inspiration for me, I became interested in philosophy because of him.

@_Dublin_Girl_ 1 year ago

I was going to ask about the accuracy of Ravelstein. It was not a flattering portrait.

@dr.michaelsugrue 1 year ago (edited)

I liked Ravelstein, but I have no idea about the connection to history. Nobody on the faculty told undergraduates very much with the exception of Norman MacLean (he was retired but still held office hours). One of the most important of university trade secrets is that you learn more from your classmates than your professors. The menagerie of intellectual beasts on the faculty provided stimulating, outlandish, contradictory ideas to intellectually ravenous off the wall students. After reading Hume in junior year, I spent several months not believing in causality, arguing against it and trying to think through what noncausal history would be like. This is just one example of my blithering idiocy and it was intellectual sparring among students who roughed me up intellectually that helped me understand the Kantian way out. Intellectual life at U of C was always a contact sport, sometimes a blood sport.



@charleshowie2074 10 months ago

TikTok is undignified.

@bacon4708 10 months ago

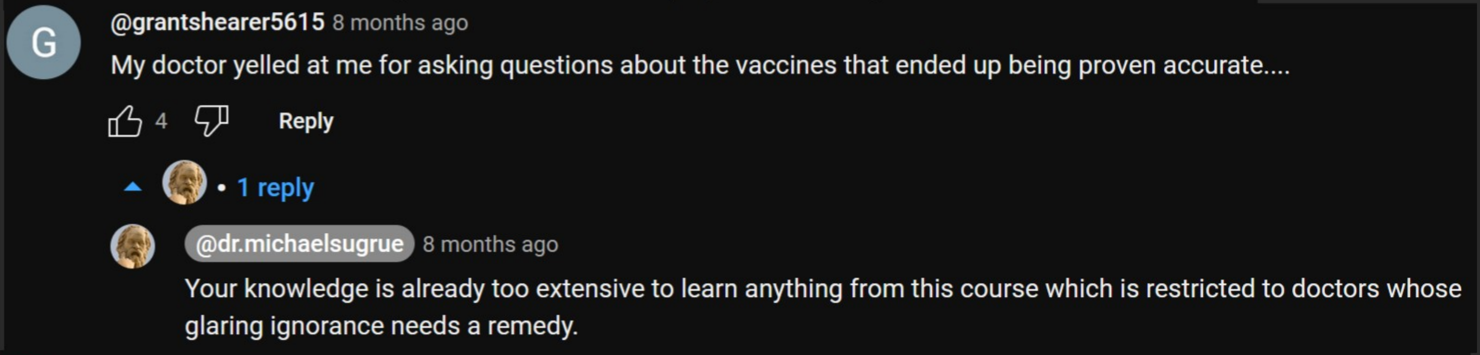
it's social media lil bro grow up

@charleshowie2074 10 months ago

@Bacon You're suggesting my opinion on TikTok being undignified stems from immaturity?

@dr.michaelsugrue 10 months ago (edited)

TicToc is not undignified. I find no hit to my ego, nor should you.

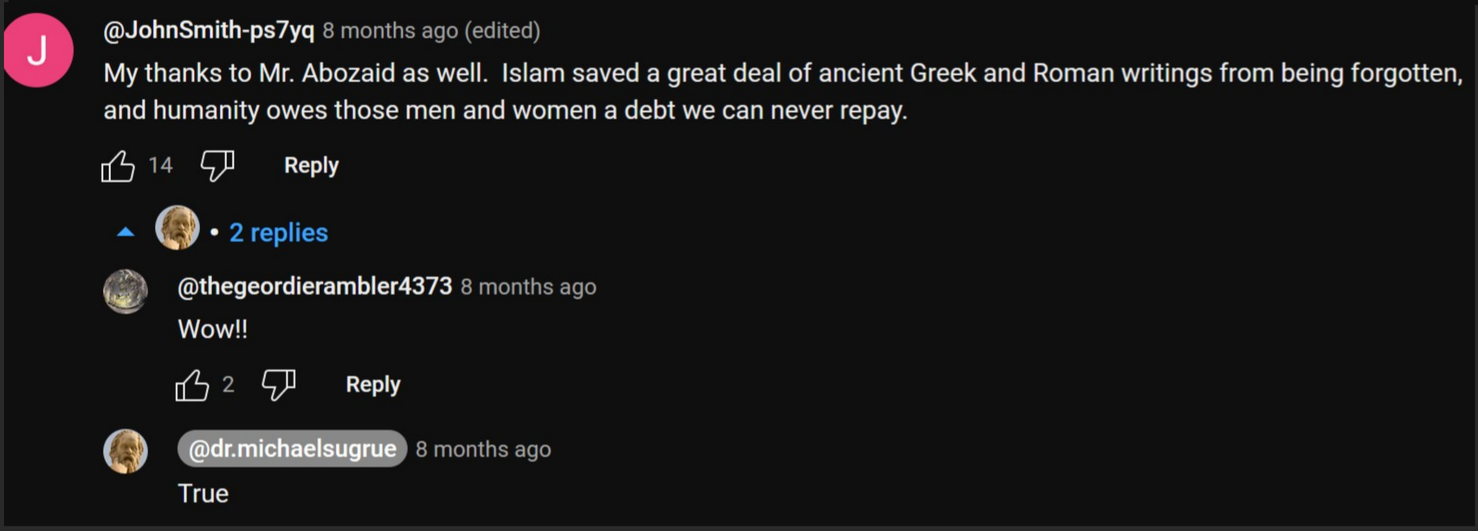


@grantshearer5615 8 months ago

My doctor yelled at me for asking questions about the vaccines that ended up being proven accurate....

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Your knowledge is already too extensive to learn anything from this course which is restricted to doctors whose glaring ignorance needs a remedy.



@JohnSmith-ps7yq 8 months ago (edited)

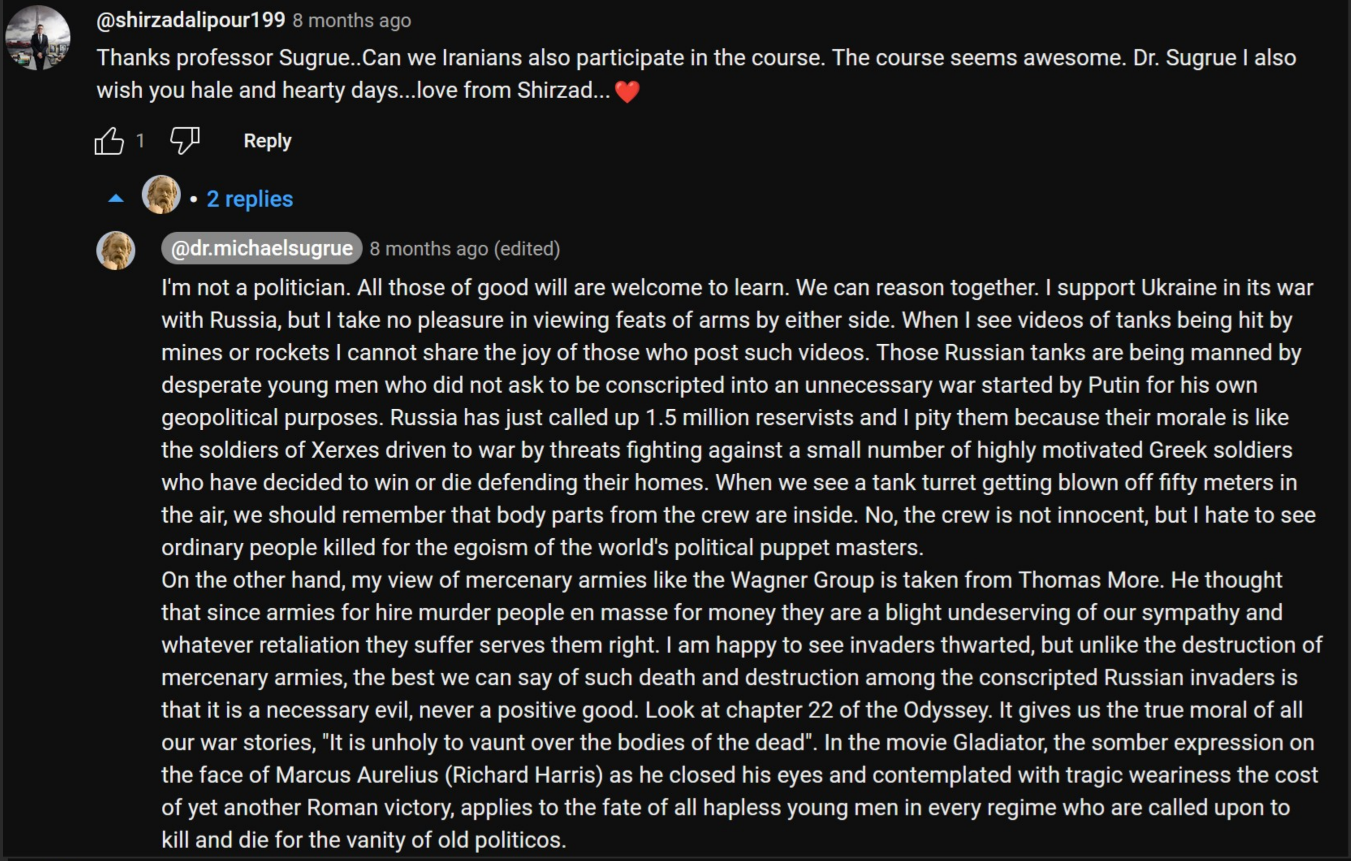
My thanks to Mr. Abozaid as well. Islam saved a great deal of ancient Greek and Roman writings from being forgotten, and humanity owes those men and women a debt we can never repay.

@thegeordierambler4373 8 months ago

Wow!!

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

True



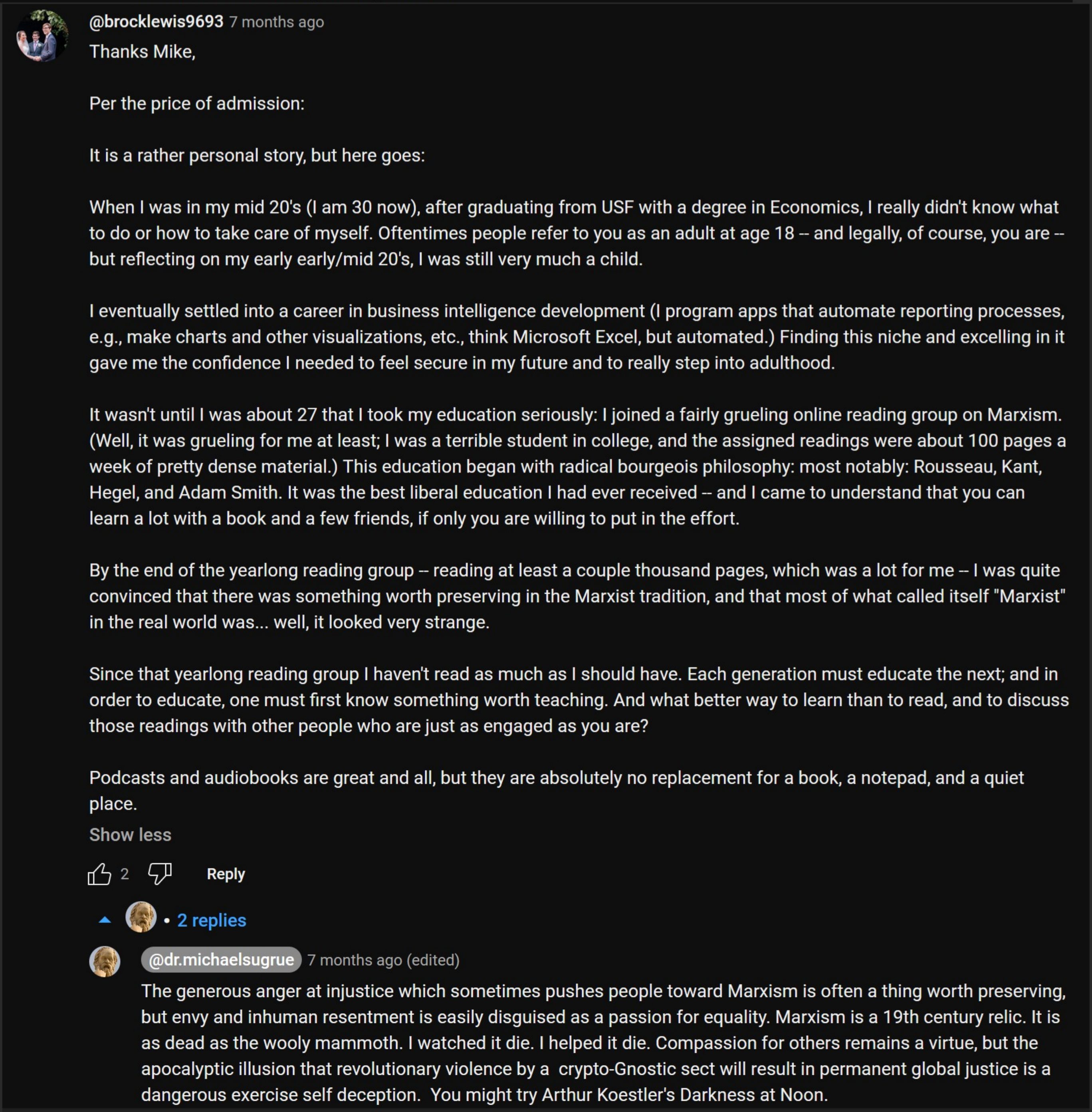
@shirzadalipour199 8 months ago

Thanks professor Sugrue..Can we Iranians also participate in the course. The course seems awesome. Dr. Sugrue I also wish you hale and hearty days...love from Shirzad... ❤️

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago (edited)

I'm not a politician. All those of good will are welcome to learn. We can reason together. I support Ukraine in its war with Russia, but I take no pleasure in viewing feats of arms by either side. When I see videos of tanks being hit by mines or rockets I cannot share the joy of those who post such videos. Those Russian tanks are being manned by desperate young men who did not ask to be conscripted into an unnecessary war started by Putin for his own geopolitical purposes. Russia has just called up 1.5 million reservists and I pity them because their morale is like the soldiers of Xerxes driven to war by threats fighting against a small number of highly motivated Greek soldiers who have decided to win or die defending their homes. When we see a tank turret getting blown off fifty meters in the air, we should remember that body parts from the crew are inside. No, the crew is not innocent, but I hate to see ordinary people killed for the egoism of the world's political puppet masters.

On the other hand, my view of mercenary armies like the Wagner Group is taken from Thomas More. He thought that since armies for hire murder people en masse for money they are a blight undeserving of our sympathy and whatever retaliation they suffer serves them right. I am happy to see invaders thwarted, but unlike the destruction of mercenary armies, the best we can say of such death and destruction among the conscripted Russian invaders is that it is a necessary evil, never a positive good. Look at chapter 22 of the Odyssey. It gives us the true moral of all our war stories, "It is unholy to vaunt over the bodies of the dead". In the movie Gladiator, the somber expression on the face of Marcus Aurelius (Richard Harris) as he closed his eyes and contemplated with tragic weariness the cost of yet another Roman victory, applies to the fate of all hapless young men in every regime who are called upon to kill and die for the vanity of old politicos.



@brocklewis9693 7 months ago

Thanks Mike,

Per the price of admission:

It is a rather personal story, but here goes:

When I was in my mid 20's (I am 30 now), after graduating from USF with a degree in Economics, I really didn't know what to do or how to take care of myself. Oftentimes people refer to you as an adult at age 18 -- and legally, of course, you are -- but reflecting on my early early/mid 20's, I was still very much a child.

I eventually settled into a career in business intelligence development (I program apps that automate reporting processes, e.g., make charts and other visualizations, etc., think Microsoft Excel, but automated.) Finding this niche and excelling in it gave me the confidence I needed to feel secure in my future and to really step into adulthood.

It wasn't until I was about 27 that I took my education seriously: I joined a fairly grueling online reading group on Marxism. (Well, it was grueling for me at least; I was a terrible student in college, and the assigned readings were about 100 pages a week of pretty dense material.) This education began with radical bourgeois philosophy: most notably: Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Adam Smith. It was the best liberal education I had ever received -- and I came to understand that you can learn a lot with a book and a few friends, if only you are willing to put in the effort.

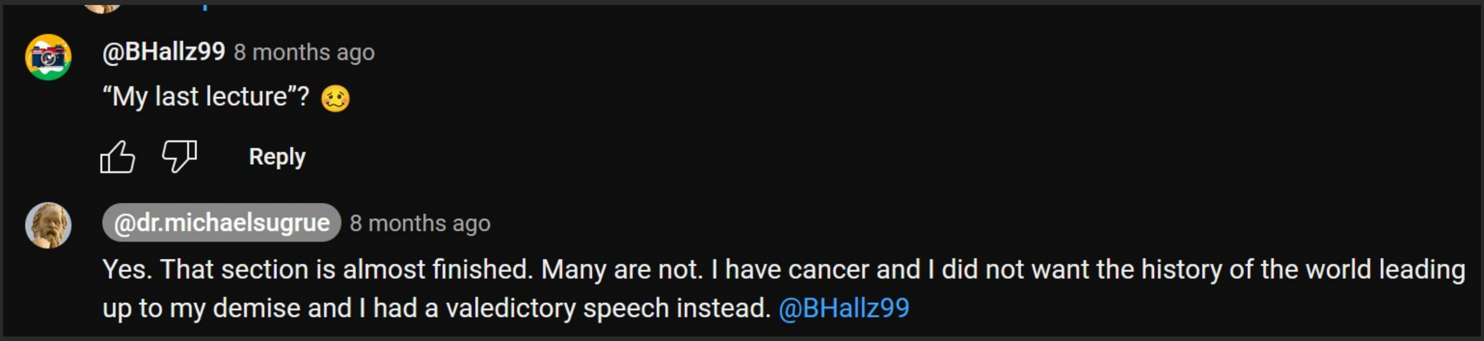
By the end of the yearlong reading group -- reading at least a couple thousand pages, which was a lot for me -- I was quite convinced that there was something worth preserving in the Marxist tradition, and that most of what called itself "Marxist" in the real world was... well, it looked very strange.

Since that yearlong reading group I haven't read as much as I should have. Each generation must educate the next; and in order to educate, one must first know something worth teaching. And what better way to learn than to read, and to discuss those readings with other people who are just as engaged as you are?

Podcasts and audiobooks are great and all, but they are absolutely no replacement for a book, a notepad, and a quiet place.

@dr.michaelsugrue 7 months ago (edited)

The generous anger at injustice which sometimes pushes people toward Marxism is often a thing worth preserving, but envy and inhuman resentment is easily disguised as a passion for equality. Marxism is a 19th century relic. It is as dead as the wooly mammoth. I watched it die. I helped it die. Compassion for others remains a virtue, but the apocalyptic illusion that revolutionary violence by a crypto-Gnostic sect will result in permanent global justice is a dangerous exercise self deception. You might try Arthur Koestler's Darkness at Noon.



@BHallz99 8 months ago

“My last lecture”? 🥴

@dr.michaelsugrue 8 months ago

Yes. That section is almost finished. Many are not. I have cancer and I did not want the history of the world leading up to my demise and I had a valedictory speech instead. @BHallz99

The Hornbook by Genevieve

“It's a compilation of short wisdom he's said to me over the past two years that I think you all would enjoy.” - Genevieve

"Always promise less than you can deliver. This is what it means to be reliable."

"I teach people how to think not what to think."

"Reason is a good servant and a bad master. What we ultimately serve is love."

"Worry is a misuse of your imagination. You will stop paying dues when you stop collecting them."

"Everything that’s high performance is high maintenance."

"All things that are true are godly."

"All things prosper and perfect themselves. My cancer is doing well and I am doing even better."

"The people we love are like mirrors. They show us things we cannot see, especially ourselves."

"I worked hard for what I got and I didn’t exploit anybody. I only exploited old books no one was reading anyway."

"Gratitude is a small virtue but ingratitude is a huge vice."

"What you see in your beloved is a mirror that reflects perfect love."

"Money is a means, not an end."

"God owes us nothing. Yet he gave us a universe. Learn to be grateful for what you have been given."

"We all want to be happy, but we cannot control the universe and what it brings us. A better idea is to live like someone who deserves to be happy and take your chances, knowing that you did what you could."

"Wealth is necessary to avoid want and scarcity, but beyond a happy sufficiency wealth is harmful because it is an invitation people send themselves to make bad decisions."

"Prayer is the practice of good intentions."

"Ability has responsibilities. Never dare forget that."

"Commit yourself to work, whatever that may mean."

"When we get to the limits of reason and science, that is where art begins"

"The big problem of human life as opposed to the natural world is the reconciliation of love and reason."

"Nobody is going to become what you want them to be, and neither are you. Either you love people as they are or you don’t love them at all."

"Guilt is the unpleasant certainty that we are not what we could have been."

"Never apologize for being ignorant, apologize for remaining ignorant."

"Making a mistake is not a problem. Making the same mistake twice is."

"He who kills time injures eternity."

(While petting our dog) "We’re all in God’s lap just like this. That’s why I don’t think there’s anything to worry about. I’m just sick with cancer. I feel perfectly safe. I have nothing but gratitude for His gifts."

"People never love the same way twice."

"Progress is not the solving of problems, it’s trading in your old problems for new ones you like better."

"Light is God's shadow."

"God is an author and the world is His novel, we live in a world that is art."

"Whenever you’re out in a new situation, ask yourself "what virtue does this require of me?'"

"Human beings are sufficiently imperfect that they can bring evil out of good, but God is sufficiently perfect that He can bring good out of evil."

"What one person knows, no one knows. What two people know, everybody knows."

"Money comes and goes, time just goes."

"Every theory of education is a disguised theory of human nature."

"If you learn to take pleasure in doing what’s right, you will have a happy life."

"All luck is good if handled properly." "Always choose self respect over self pity."

"Every insight is partial blindness."

"Theology is like pointing a flashlight at the sun so you can see it better."

“There are two indispensable rules for thinkers: 1. Never reveal everything that you know.”

“Love is an attempt to abolish time.”

“Confidence is the feeling people have before they understand what is going on.”

“If you believe that “learning is fun” you know little about either.”

“Brakes make a car go faster: self discipline produces freedom.”

“Avoid extremes in religion: complete skepticism is a very seductive dogma.”

“If you find someone opaque and have trouble understanding their character, examine his friends.” “

“Why do you want to impress people you don’t even like?”

“Be reasonable: demand everything.”

“A thinker is judged by the quality of the questions he asks, the answers he gives are much less important.”

“Everything takes longer than it should and costs more than you expect.”

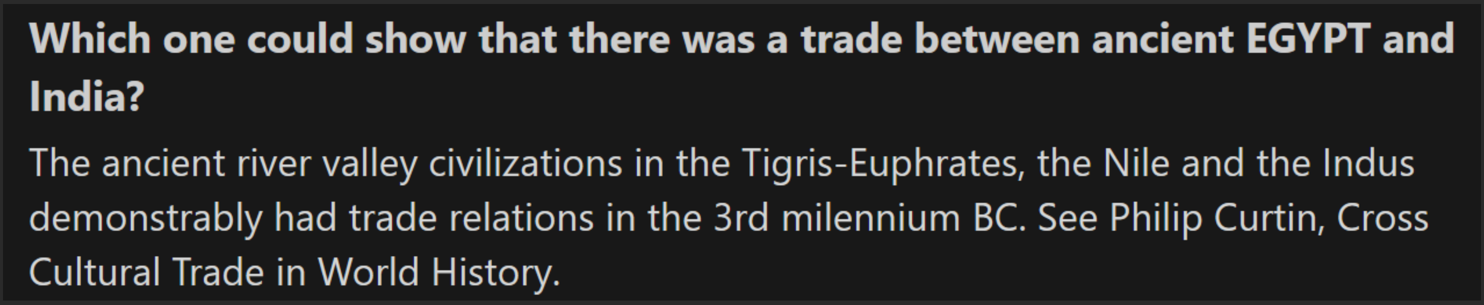
“Many people find new ideas threatening. However, if you seriously think things through you’ll often find old ideas at least equally dangerous.”

“Effectiveness is organizing your time. Sanity is organizing your feelings.”

“You will get into far more trouble speaking when you should remain silent that remaining silent when you should speak. The first step toward wisdom is learning how to hold your tongue.”

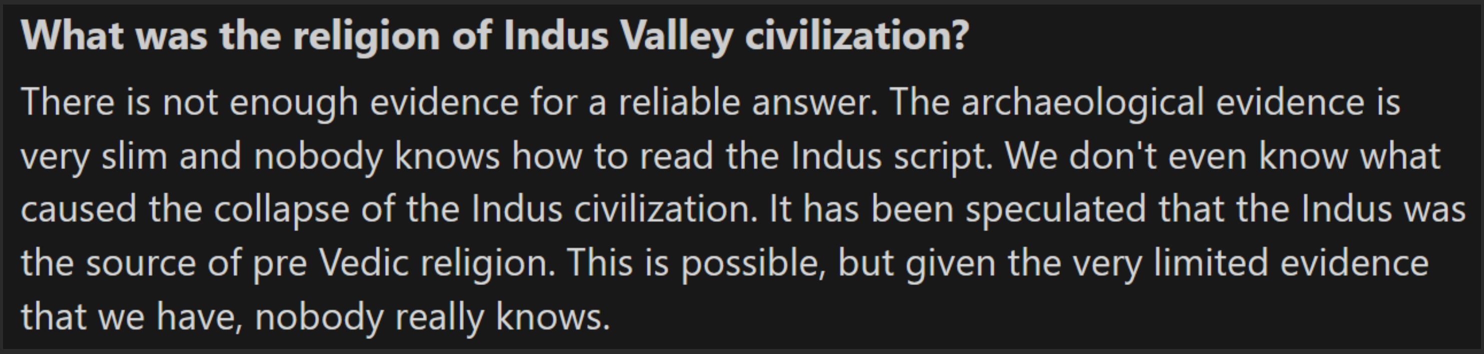
“You can’t get what you want until you know what you want.”

Comments and Answers from Quora (Small text is Mike)



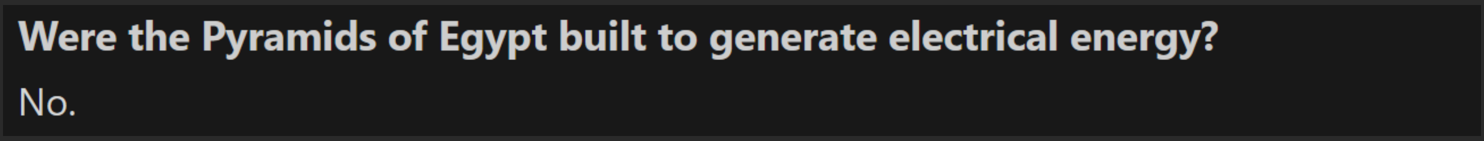
Which one could show that there was a trade between ancient EGYPT and India?

The ancient river valley civilizations in the Tigris-Euphrates, the Nile and the Indus demonstrably had trade relations in the 3rd milennium BC. See Philip Curtin, Cross Cultural Trade in World History.



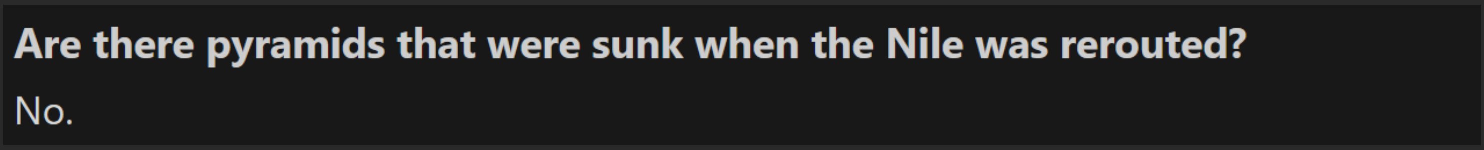
What was the religion of Indus Valley civilization?

There is not enough evidence for a reliable answer. The archaeological evidence is very slim and nobody knows how to read the Indus script. We don't even know what caused the collapse of the Indus civilization. It has been speculated that the Indus was the source of pre Vedic religion. This is possible, but given the very limited evidence that we have, nobody really knows.



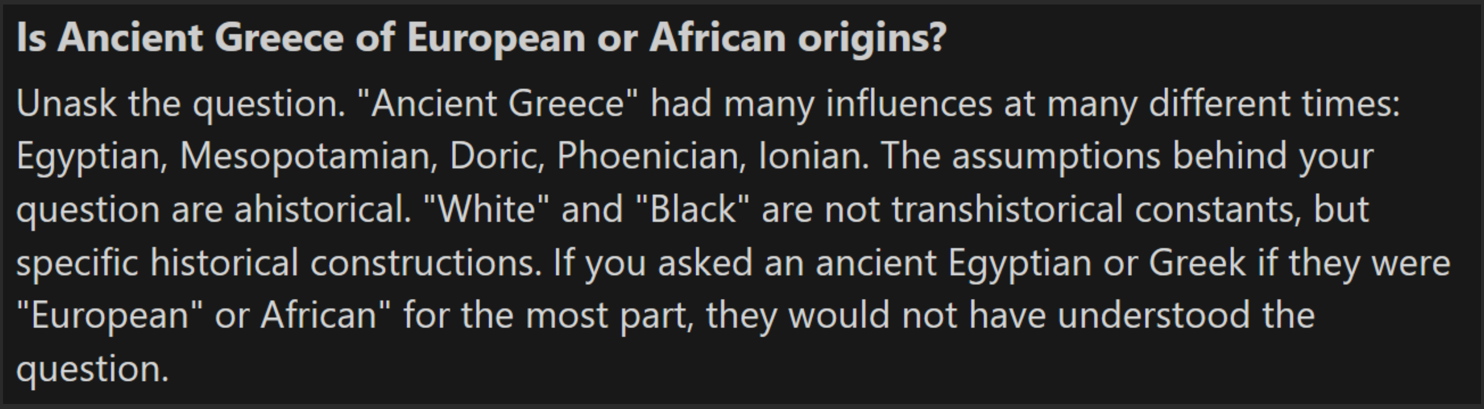
Were the Pyramids of Egypt built to generate electrical energy?

No.



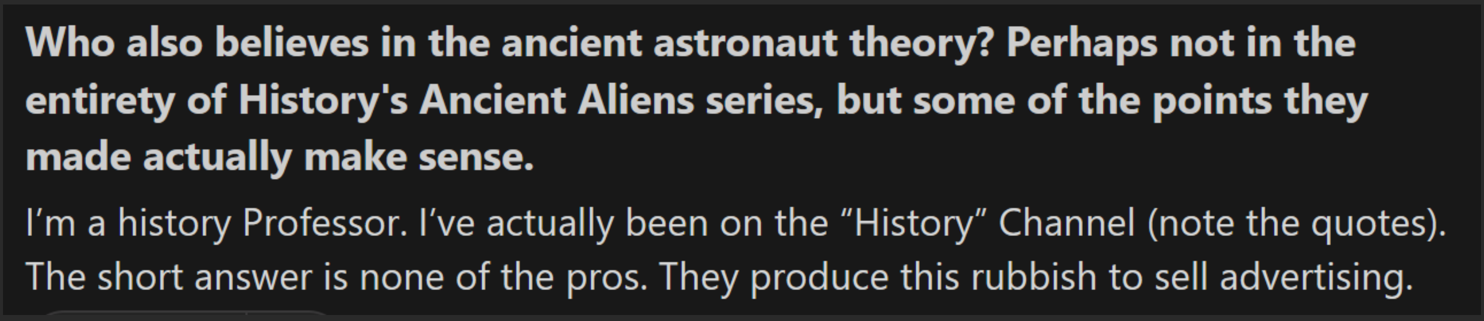
Are there pyramids that were sunk when the Nile was rerouted?

No.



Is Ancient Greece of European or African origins?

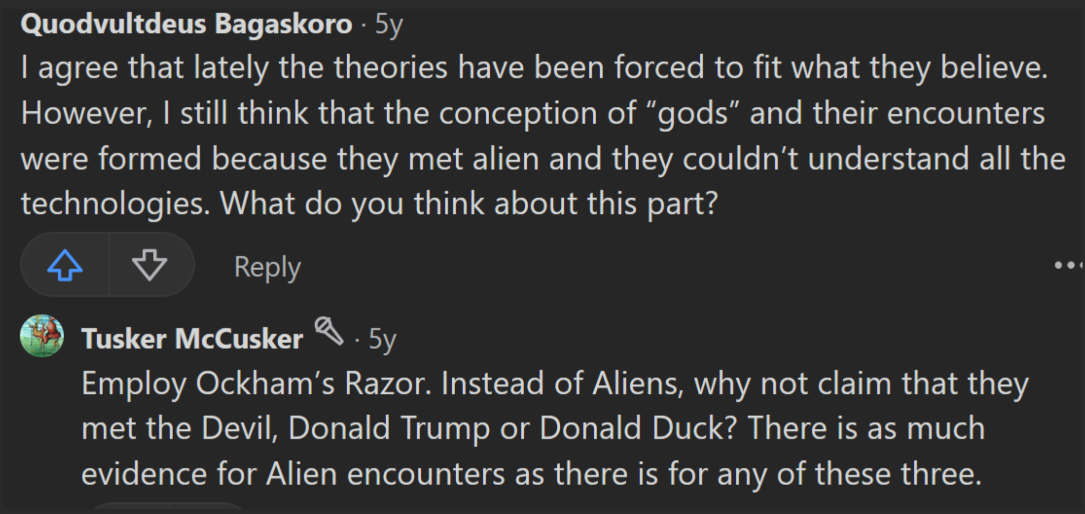
Unask the question. "Ancient Greece" had many influences at many different times: Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Doric, Phoenician, Ionian. The assumptions behind your question are ahistorical. "White" and "Black" are not transhistorical constants, but specific historical constructions. If you asked an ancient Egyptian or Greek if they were "European" or African" for the most part, they would not have understood the question.



Who also believes in the ancient astronaut theory? Perhaps not in the entirety of History's Ancient Aliens series, but some of the points they made actually make sense.

I'm a history Professor. I've actually been on the "History" Channel (note the quotes). The short answer is none of the pros. They produce this rubbish to sell advertising.

→

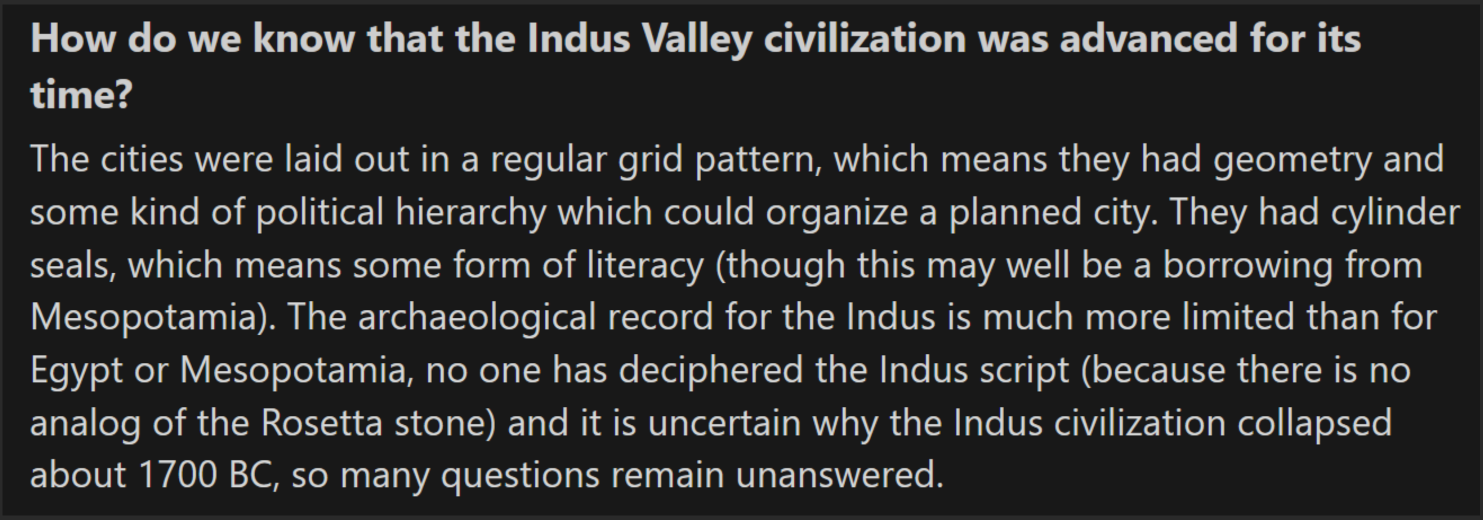


Quodvultdeus Bagaskoro · 5y

I agree that lately the theories have been forced to fit what they believe. However, I still think that the conception of “gods” and their encounters were formed because they met alien and they couldn’t understand all the technologies. What do you think about this part?

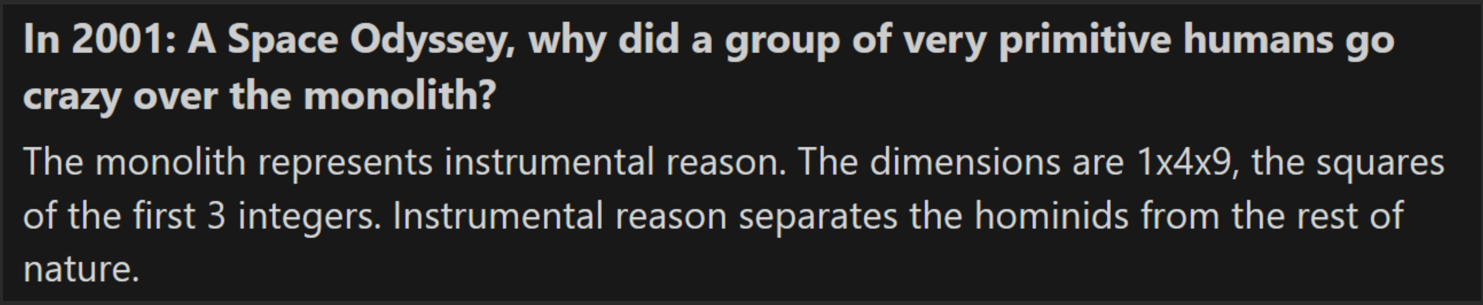
Tusker McCusker · 5y

Employ Ockham’s Razor. Instead of Aliens, why not claim that they met the Devil, Donald Trump or Donald Duck? There is as much evidence for Alien encounters as there is for any of these three.



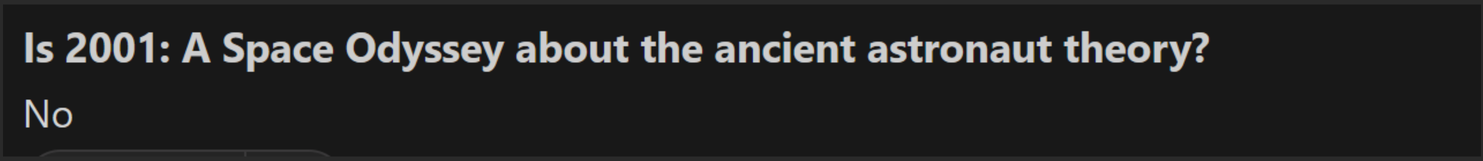
How do we know that the Indus Valley civilization was advanced for its time?

The cities were laid out in a regular grid pattern, which means they had geometry and some kind of political hierarchy which could organize a planned city. They had cylinder seals, which means some form of literacy (though this may well be a borrowing from Mesopotamia). The archaeological record for the Indus is much more limited than for Egypt or Mesopotamia, no one has deciphered the Indus script (because there is no analog of the Rosetta stone) and it is uncertain why the Indus civilization collapsed about 1700 BC, so many questions remain unanswered.



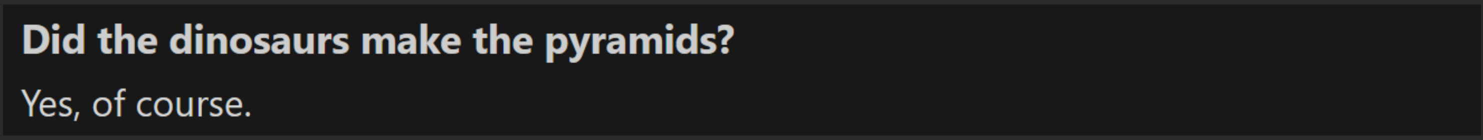
In 2001: A Space Odyssey, why did a group of very primitive humans go crazy over the monolith?

The monolith represents instrumental reason. The dimensions are 1x4x9, the squares of the first 3 integers. Instrumental reason separates the hominids from the rest of nature.



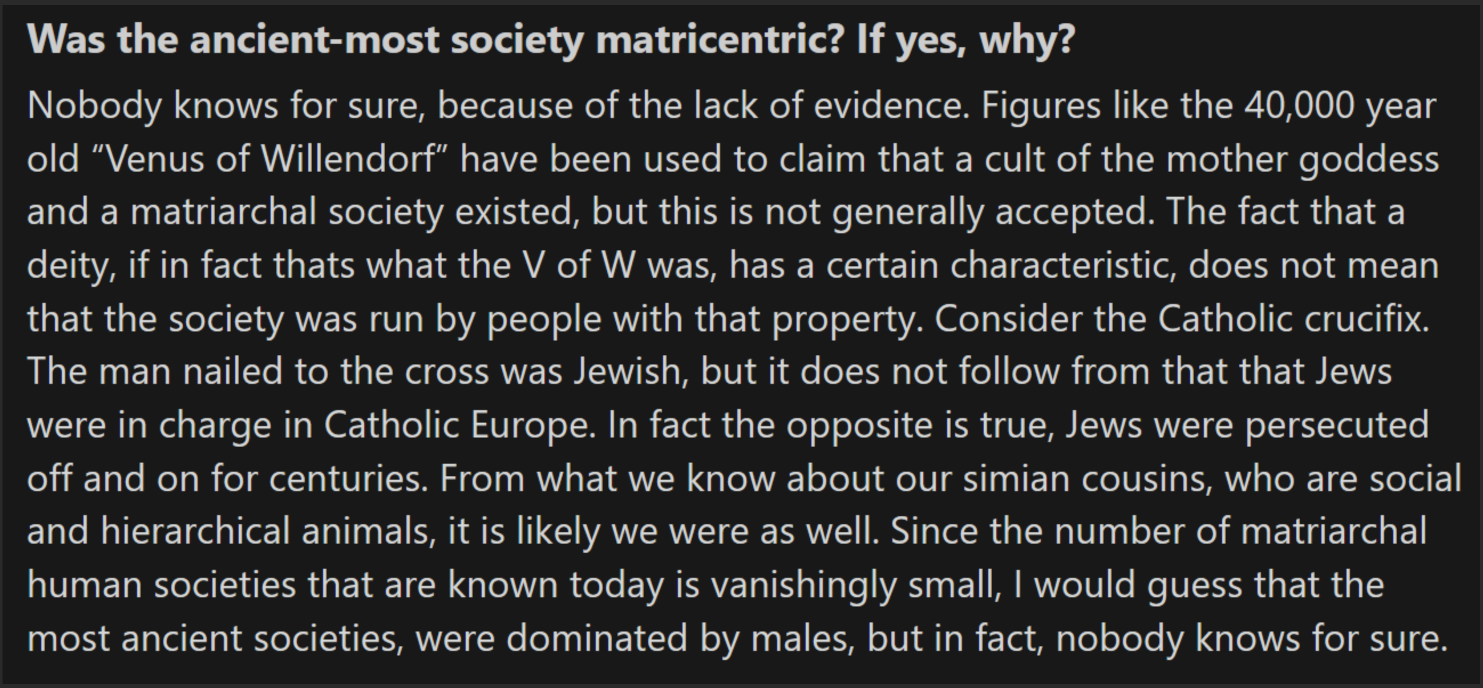
Is 2001: A Space Odyssey about the ancient astronaut theory?

No



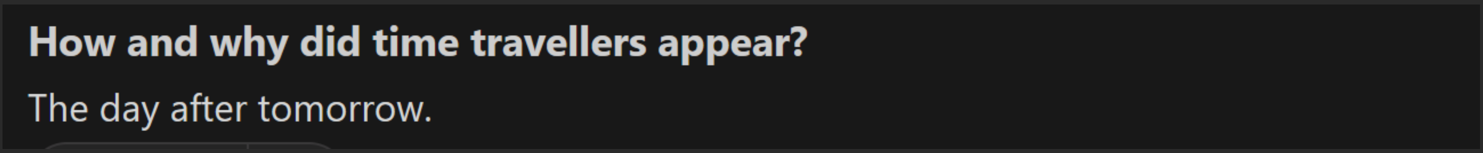
Did the dinosaurs make the pyramids?

Yes, of course.



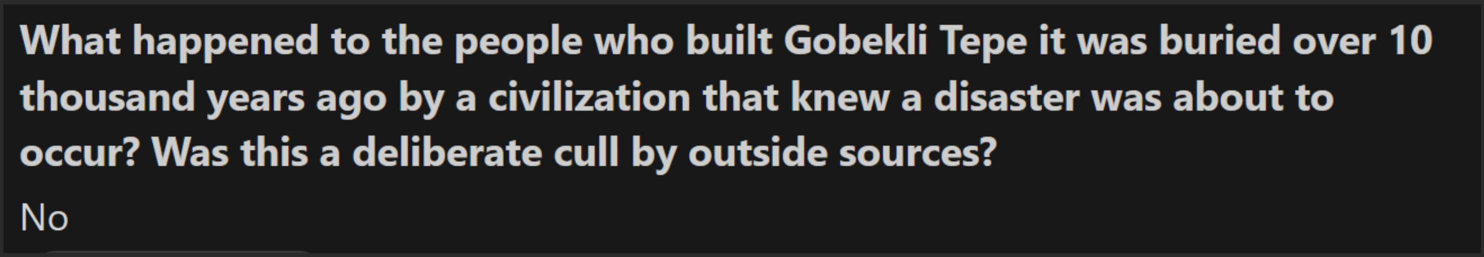
Was the ancient-most society matricentric? If yes, why?

Nobody knows for sure, because of the lack of evidence. Figures like the 40,000 year old “Venus of Willendorf” have been used to claim that a cult of the mother goddess and a matriarchal society existed, but this is not generally accepted. The fact that a deity, if in fact thats what the V of W was, has a certain characteristic, does not mean that the society was run by people with that property. Consider the Catholic crucifix. The man nailed to the cross was Jewish, but it does not follow from that that Jews were in charge in Catholic Europe. In fact the opposite is true, Jews were persecuted off and on for centuries. From what we know about our simian cousins, who are social and hierarchical animals, it is likely we were as well. Since the number of matriarchal human societies that are known today is vanishingly small, I would guess that the most ancient societies, were dominated by males, but in fact, nobody knows for sure.



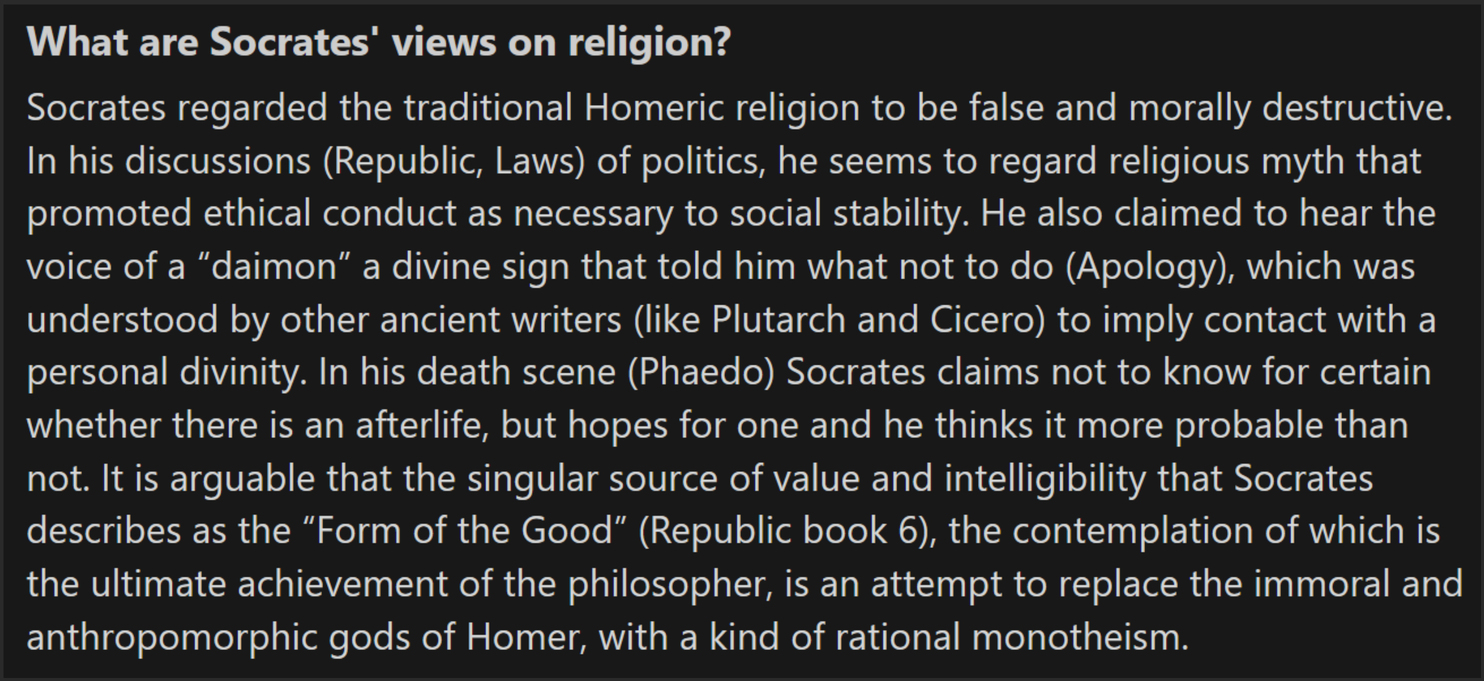
How and why did time travellers appear?

The day after tomorrow.



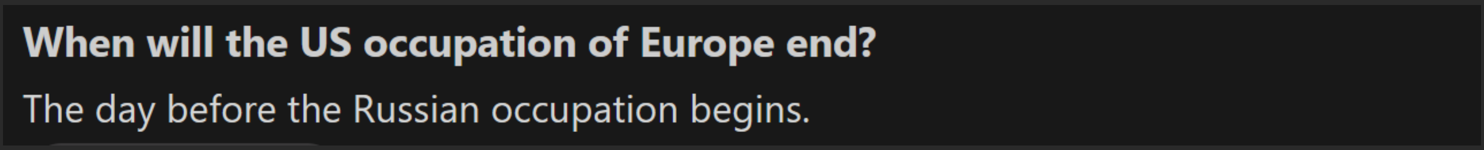
What happened to the people who built Gobekli Tepe it was buried over 10 thousand years ago by a civilization that knew a disaster was about to occur? Was this a deliberate cull by outside sources?

No



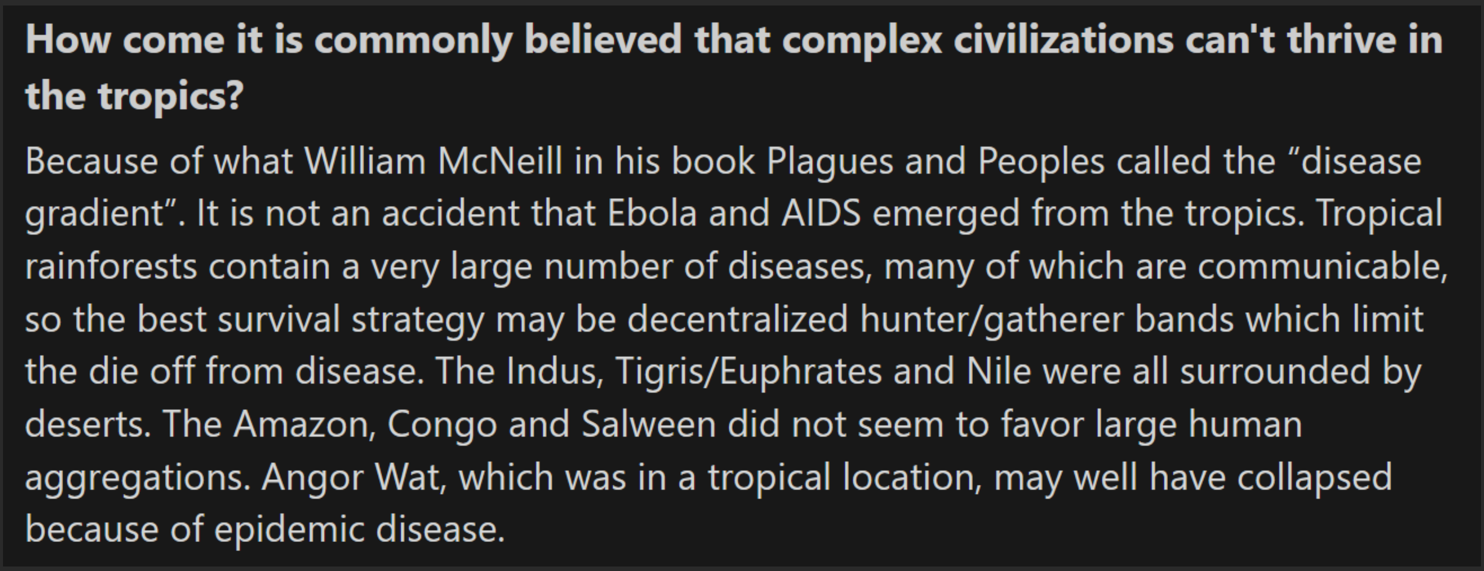
What are Socrates' views on religion?

Socrates regarded the traditional Homeric religion to be false and morally destructive. In his discussions (Republic, Laws) of politics, he seems to regard religious myth that promoted ethical conduct as necessary to social stability. He also claimed to hear the voice of a “daimon” a divine sign that told him what not to do (Apology), which was understood by other ancient writers (like Plutarch and Cicero) to imply contact with a personal divinity. In his death scene (Phaedo) Socrates claims not to know for certain whether there is an afterlife, but hopes for one and he thinks it more probable than not. It is arguable that the singular source of value and intelligibility that Socrates describes as the “Form of the Good” (Republic book 6), the contemplation of which is the ultimate achievement of the philosopher, is an attempt to replace the immoral and anthropomorphic gods of Homer, with a kind of rational monotheism.



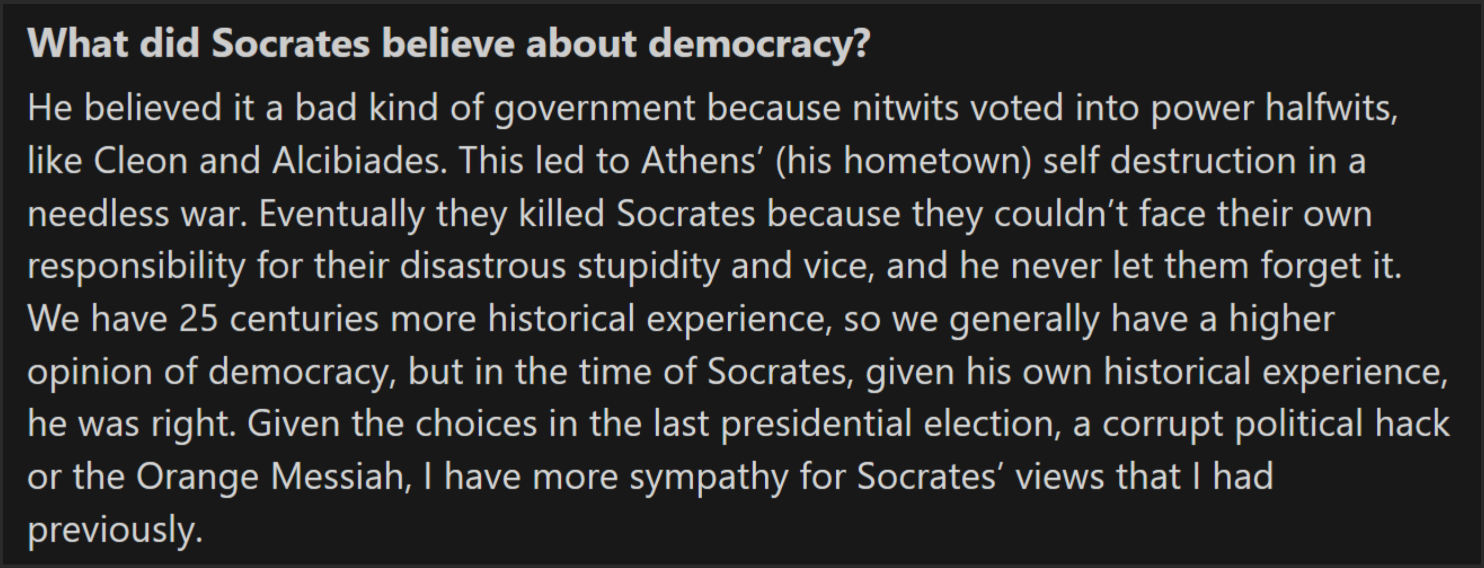
When will the US occupation of Europe end?

The day before the Russian occupation begins.



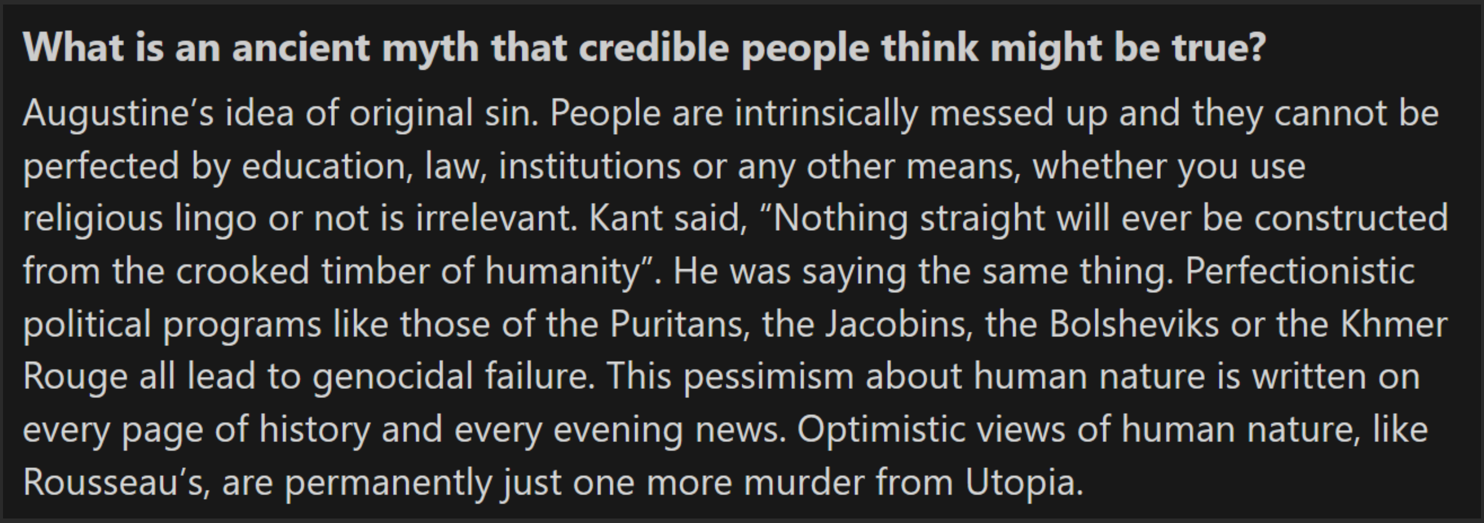
How come it is commonly believed that complex civilizations can't thrive in the tropics?

Because of what William McNeill in his book Plagues and Peoples called the “disease gradient”. It is not an accident that Ebola and AIDS emerged from the tropics. Tropical rainforests contain a very large number of diseases, many of which are communicable, so the best survival strategy may be decentralized hunter/gatherer bands which limit the die off from disease. The Indus, Tigris/Euphrates and Nile were all surrounded by deserts. The Amazon, Congo and Salween did not seem to favor large human aggregations. Angor Wat, which was in a tropical location, may well have collapsed because of epidemic disease.



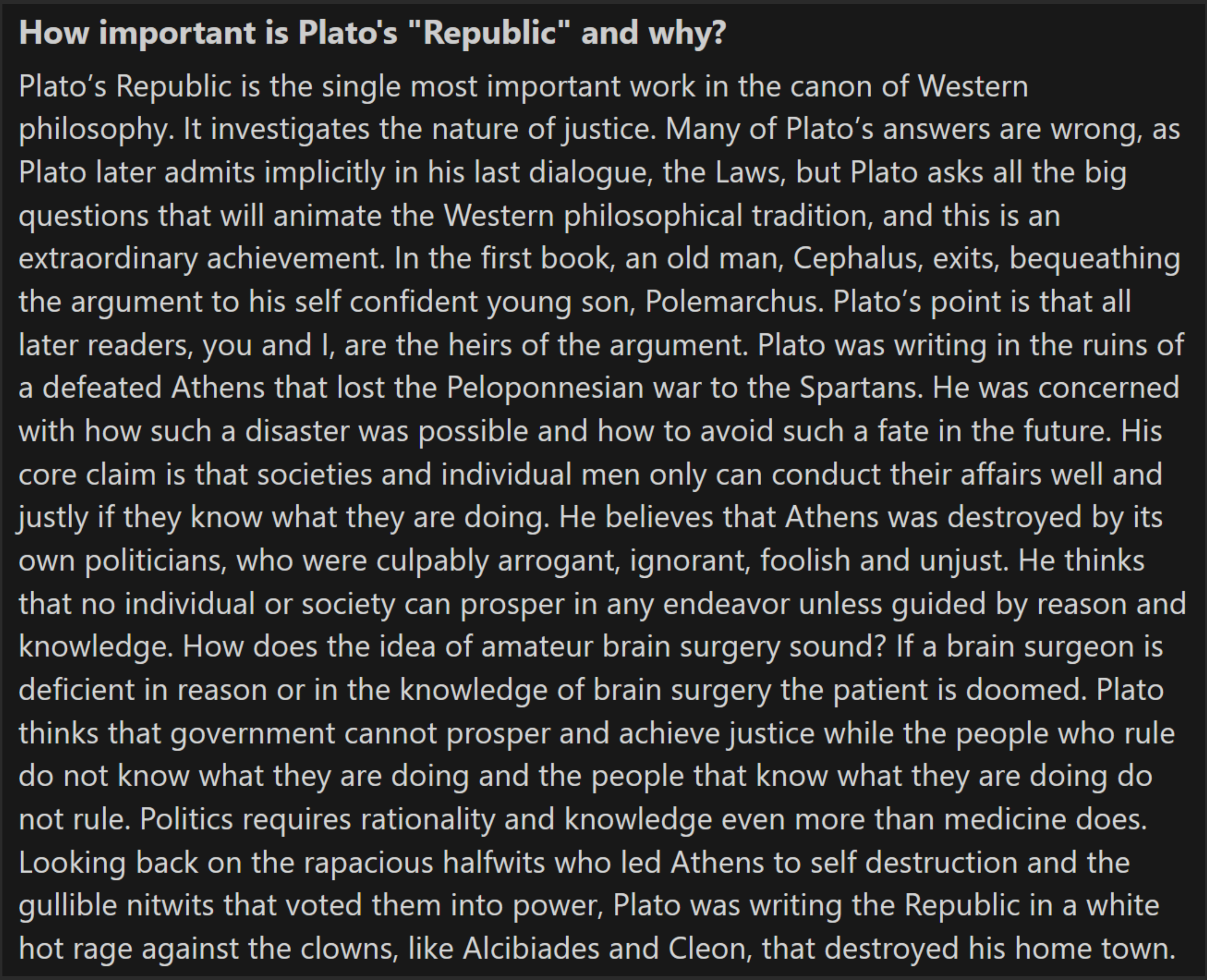
What did Socrates believe about democracy?

He believed it a bad kind of government because nitwits voted into power halfwits, like Cleon and Alcibiades. This led to Athens’ (his hometown) self destruction in a needless war. Eventually they killed Socrates because they couldn’t face their own responsibility for their disastrous stupidity and vice, and he never let them forget it. We have 25 centuries more historical experience, so we generally have a higher opinion of democracy, but in the time of Socrates, given his own historical experience, he was right. Given the choices in the last presidential election, a corrupt political hack or the Orange Messiah, I have more sympathy for Socrates’ views that I had previously.



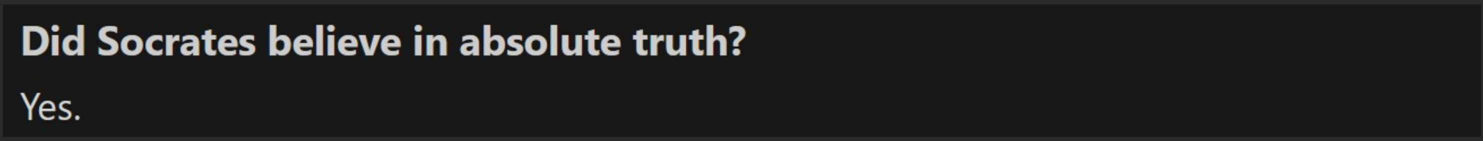
What is an ancient myth that credible people think might be true?

Augustine’s idea of original sin. People are intrinsically messed up and they cannot be perfected by education, law, institutions or any other means, whether you use religious lingo or not is irrelevant. Kant said, “Nothing straight will ever be constructed from the crooked timber of humanity”. He was saying the same thing. Perfectionistic political programs like those of the Puritans, the Jacobins, the Bolsheviks or the Khmer Rouge all lead to genocidal failure. This pessimism about human nature is written on every page of history and every evening news. Optimistic views of human nature, like Rousseau’s, are permanently just one more murder from Utopia.



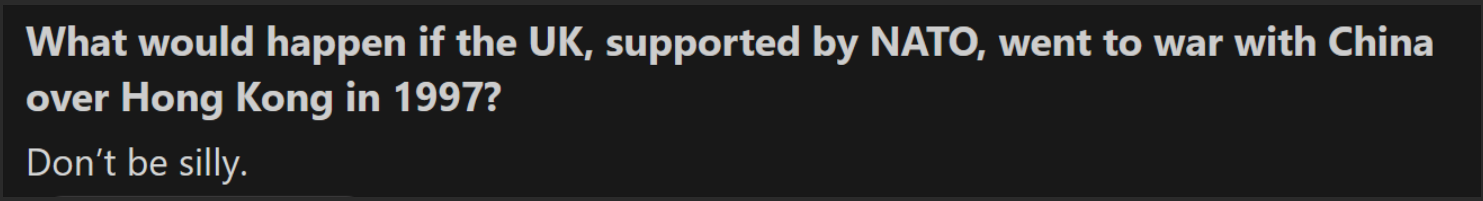
How important is Plato's "Republic" and why?

Plato’s Republic is the single most important work in the canon of Western philosophy. It investigates the nature of justice. Many of Plato’s answers are wrong, as Plato later admits implicitly in his last dialogue, the Laws, but Plato asks all the big questions that will animate the Western philosophical tradition, and this is an extraordinary achievement. In the first book, an old man, Cephalus, exits, bequeathing the argument to his self confident young son, Polemarchus. Plato’s point is that all later readers, you and I, are the heirs of the argument. Plato was writing in the ruins of a defeated Athens that lost the Peloponnesian war to the Spartans. He was concerned with how such a disaster was possible and how to avoid such a fate in the future. His core claim is that societies and individual men only can conduct their affairs well and justly if they know what they are doing. He believes that Athens was destroyed by its own politicians, who were culpably arrogant, ignorant, foolish and unjust. He thinks that no individual or society can prosper in any endeavor unless guided by reason and knowledge. How does the idea of amateur brain surgery sound? If a brain surgeon is deficient in reason or in the knowledge of brain surgery the patient is doomed. Plato thinks that government cannot prosper and achieve justice while the people who rule do not know what they are doing and the people that know what they are doing do not rule. Politics requires rationality and knowledge even more than medicine does. Looking back on the rapacious halfwits who led Athens to self destruction and the gullible nitwits that voted them into power, Plato was writing the Republic in a white hot rage against the clowns, like Alcibiades and Cleon, that destroyed his home town.



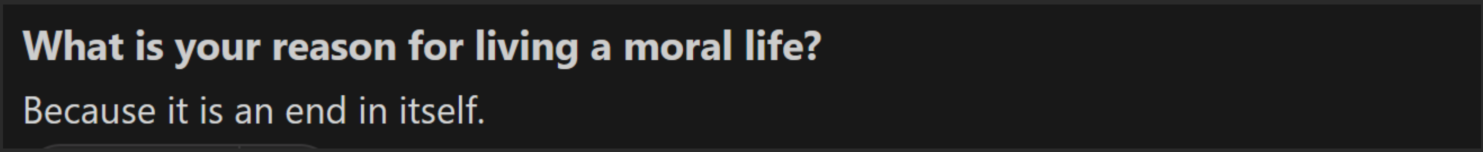
Did Socrates believe in absolute truth?

Yes.



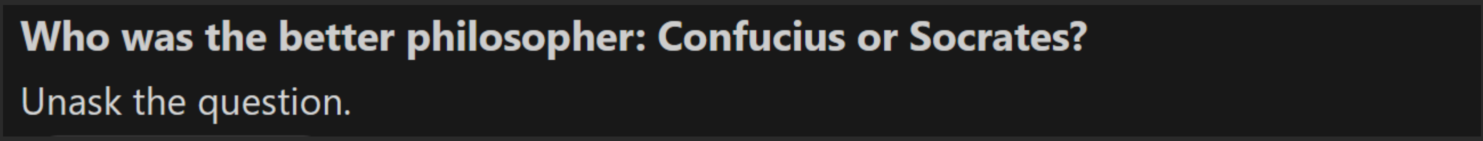
What would happen if the UK, supported by NATO, went to war with China over Hong Kong in 1997?

Don’t be silly.



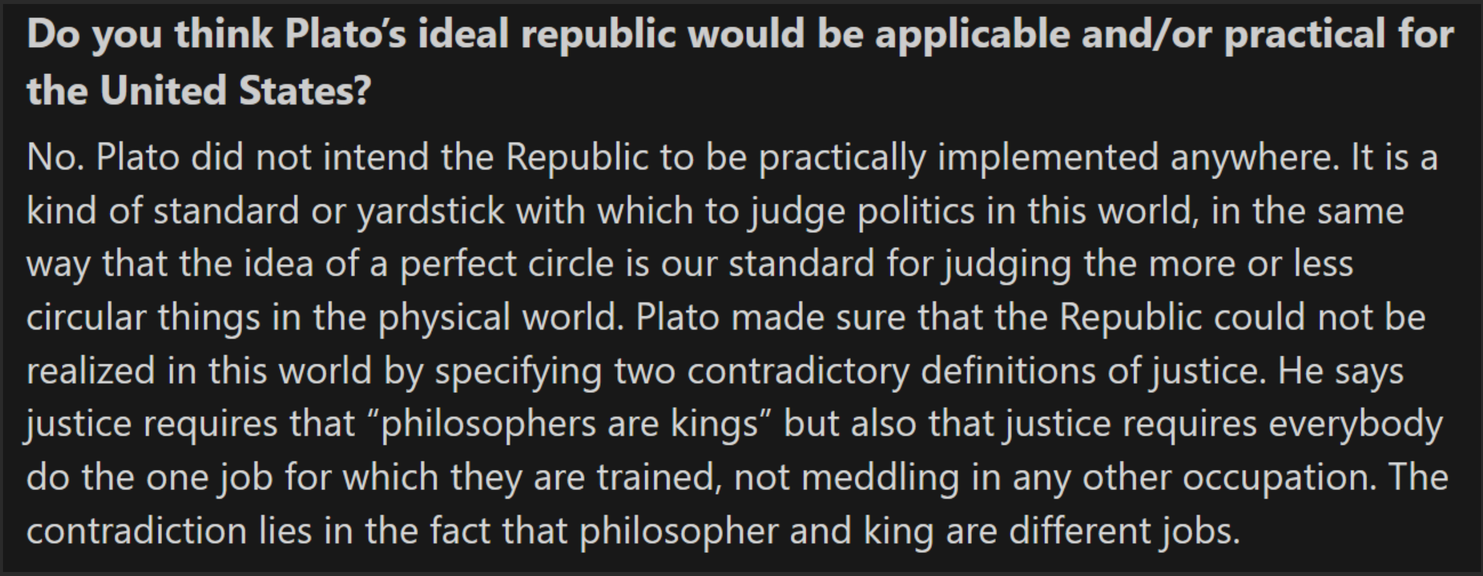
What is your reason for living a moral life?

Because it is an end in itself.



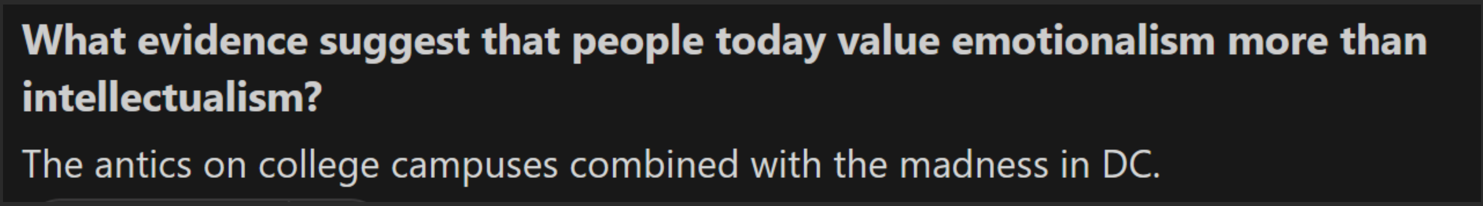
Who was the better philosopher: Confucius or Socrates?

Unask the question.



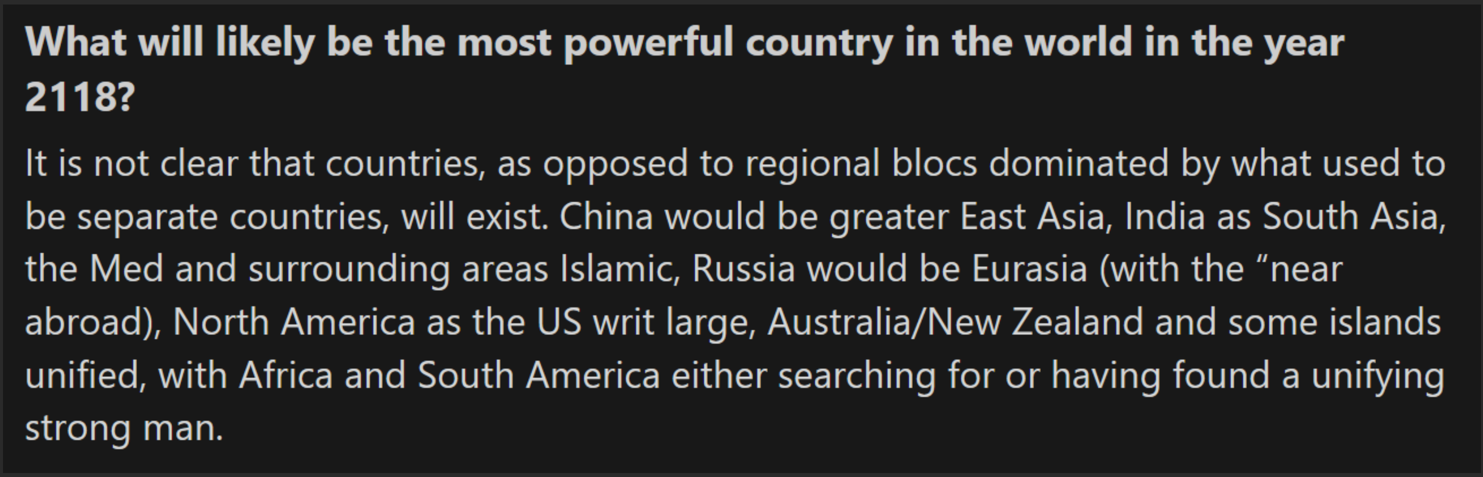
Do you think Plato's ideal republic would be applicable and/or practical for the United States?

No. Plato did not intend the Republic to be practically implemented anywhere. It is a kind of standard or yardstick with which to judge politics in this world, in the same way that the idea of a perfect circle is our standard for judging the more or less circular things in the physical world. Plato made sure that the Republic could not be realized in this world by specifying two contradictory definitions of justice. He says justice requires that "philosophers are kings" but also that justice requires everybody do the one job for which they are trained, not meddling in any other occupation. The contradiction lies in the fact that philosopher and king are different jobs.



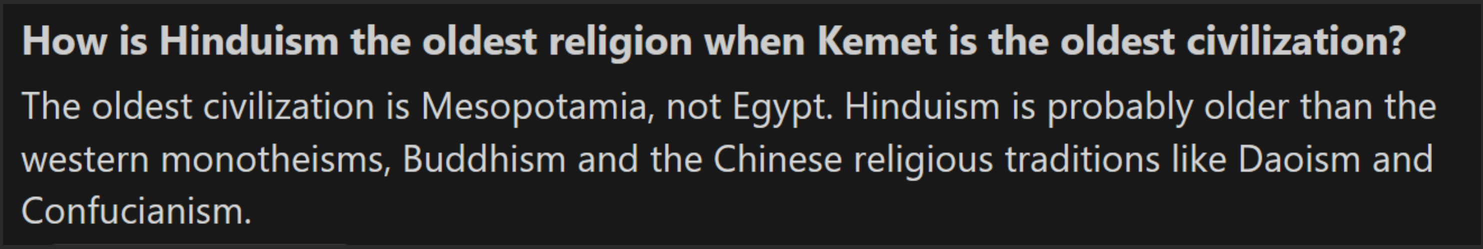
What evidence suggest that people today value emotionalism more than intellectualism?

The antics on college campuses combined with the madness in DC.



What will likely be the most powerful country in the world in the year 2118?

It is not clear that countries, as opposed to regional blocs dominated by what used to be separate countries, will exist. China would be greater East Asia, India as South Asia, the Med and surrounding areas Islamic, Russia would be Eurasia (with the "near abroad), North America as the US writ large, Australia/New Zealand and some islands unified, with Africa and South America either searching for or having found a unifying strong man.



How is Hinduism the oldest religion when Kemet is the oldest civilization?

The oldest civilization is Mesopotamia, not Egypt. Hinduism is probably older than the western monotheisms, Buddhism and the Chinese religious traditions like Daoism and Confucianism.

In warfare, why were women not enrolled in significant numbers in fighting roles during ancient history and middle ages?

For the same reason that the Olympics are segregated by sex. Men are generally larger, stronger and faster than women. If Wimbledon did not have separate groupings of males and females, there would be no women playing, because any of the hundred best male tennis players would defeat the number one woman handily. In ancient and medieval warfare, muscle power determined the outcome. In modern warfare, where machine power has replaced muscle power, women are able to perform most of the combat roles that were previously just open to men.

Why is linear time so important in Western Civilisation when most of the civilizations of the world lived in circular realities?

Monotheism. Monotheistic history is Providential. It has a “plot”.

For Jews, Christians and Moslems, history has a beginning, middle and end (like Aristotle’s view of tragedy). The beginning is Creation. The middle varies: the receipt of the Law by Moses, the death and resurrection of Jesus, the final revelation to Mohammed. The end of history is a final divine judgement.

This linear view of history is pseudo-secularized by Condorcet during the French revolution and in 19th century Germany by Hegel and Marx. There would be no idea of “progress” without it. Despite all protestations, the idea of progress is theological.

“Progressive” politics today does not know itself or its intellectual origins. College education has failed young progressives. They know not who they are. “Progressive” politics is a gnostic cult for people who think themselves too sophisticated for religion but believe in the absolute righteousness of their feelings for reasons they cannot explain.

What are some examples of philosophers of education and their contributions?

Every philosophy of human nature is a disguised philosophy of education. Thus every philosopher (even those existentialists that deny human nature) is a philosopher of education.

Do you think it will be easier or harder to get into UChicago now that they’ve eliminated testing requirements?

Easier for some harder for others. Despite all the “holistic” pieties, in fact they want to admit more black and hispanic students and fewer asians for political reasons, but they fear a lawsuit like the one currently directed at Harvard, which would reveal the differential admission standards.

What kind of student should or should not attend UChicago?

Weirdos. It is intellectual ninja training. You must be willing to get your ass kicked intellectually and like it. If you want fun with well adjusted classmates, this is the wrong place, if you want to hang around with 18 year olds of varying levels of madness (or autism), intellectual freaks of nature that may someday will a Nobel, this is the place. If you can get into U of C, you can get into other high end places that are more fun. U of C is, with some justice, called the “teacher of teachers”. I spent most of my career on the faculty at Columbia, Johns Hopkins and Princeton. These are excellent places to get an education, but U of C is the most demanding undergrad degree program that I know of. The only thing that I think comes close is Caltech, but there you get exclusively natural science, while U of C is much broader in the demands placed on undergraduates. Everybody is bad at something, and at U of C you will find out, perhaps for the first time in your life, what it is like to be the dumb kid in the class. This is actually good for you, but you won’t understand why until later. Even though the requirements have been dumbed down since back in the day, it is still a very demanding education. I found graduate school much easier than college. If you have the chops, you can take grad courses and a lot of undergrads do. Three ten week terms mean that you usually carry twelve courses a year as an undergrad. Midterms are five weeks after the class starts, so you can’t fall behind on the reading. Moreover, there is no “reading period” in which to make up for lost time. Starting at the first of January, you will have classes 22 of the next 23 weeks. Back in the day, Regenstein Library was the most popular undergraduate spot on campus. My nephew is there and he tells me it still is. You will pay your dues, but you will get an education.

Is the difficulty at the University of Chicago exaggerated?

No.

What was the main occupation of the people of the Indus Valley civilization?

Farming. The same as every other ancient civilization.

Who is the “true hero” in Fyodor Dostoevsky’s Brothers Karamazov and why?

The hero of the Brothers K. is the same as the hero of all the other Dostoyevsky novels: God. God is the source of the anguish all the characters in all Dostoyevsky novels feel when they encounter moral chaos. As Meister Eckhardt said, “God clears His throat, as if to announce His presence without speaking.”

What is Michel Foucault best known for?

Nihilism and sodomy.

What made China a superpower before the Industrial Revolution? It seemed to reign supreme in Asia before the arrival of Westerners and the Century of Humiliation.

Early unification (221BC).

Relative immunity to invasion due to the Great Wall.

Superior administration by the Mandarin class.

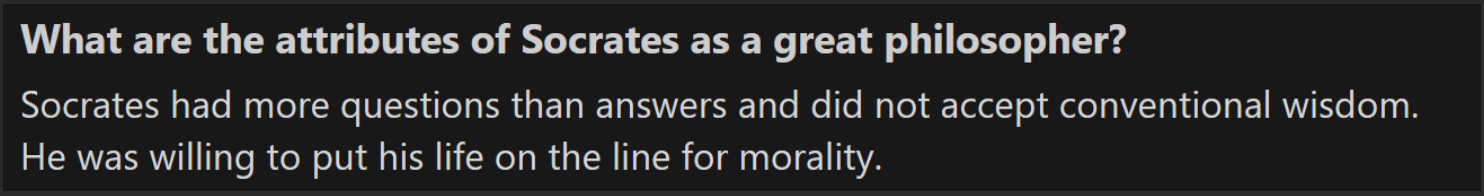
A sophisticated theory of nature, analogous to the nonmythological science of the Greek Presocratic physicists.

Thus China created the most important technological advances, the “four inventions”: paper, printing, the magnetic mariner’s compass and gunpowder.

By the time Europeans made contact with China around 1500, Europe was in the Renaissance. A unprecedented scientific revolution was beginning, which catapulted the West into world domination.

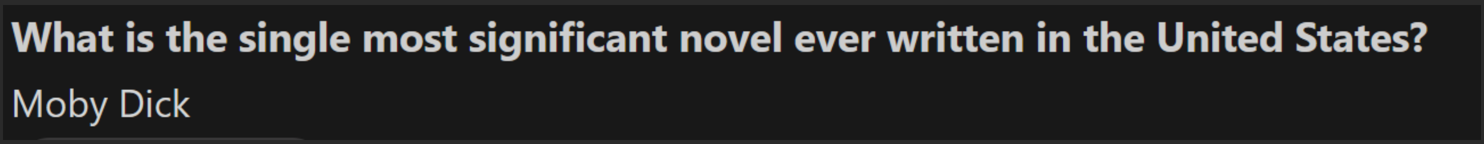
Why do the Jesuits try to force their Big Bang theory on us? I agree with the Protestants, that the Catholic idea of the Big Bang and evolution is a big mess.

“Jesuits” have nothing to do with this. Biology as it currently is understood, is unintelligible without evolution. When you hear about antibiotic resistant bacteria, you are watching evolution happening. The Big Bang is a best guess that physicists have about the earliest time of nature. Like any scientific claim, it is simply the last unfalsified explanation, if evidence emerges which contradicts it, the belief will change. The idea that the Catholic Church is the source of contemporary biology and physics is not worth discussing.



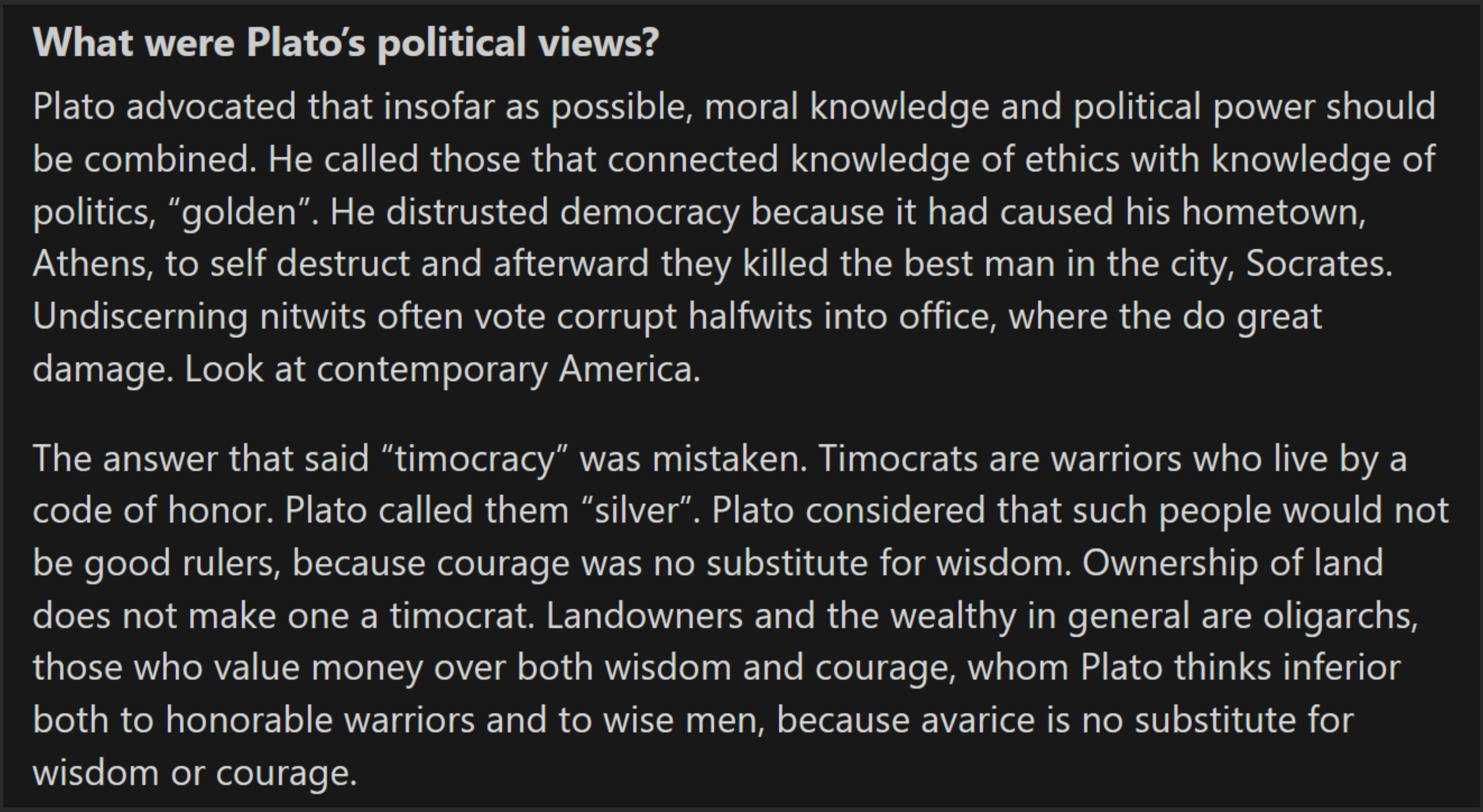
What are the attributes of Socrates as a great philosopher?

Socrates had more questions than answers and did not accept conventional wisdom. He was willing to put his life on the line for morality.



What is the single most significant novel ever written in the United States?

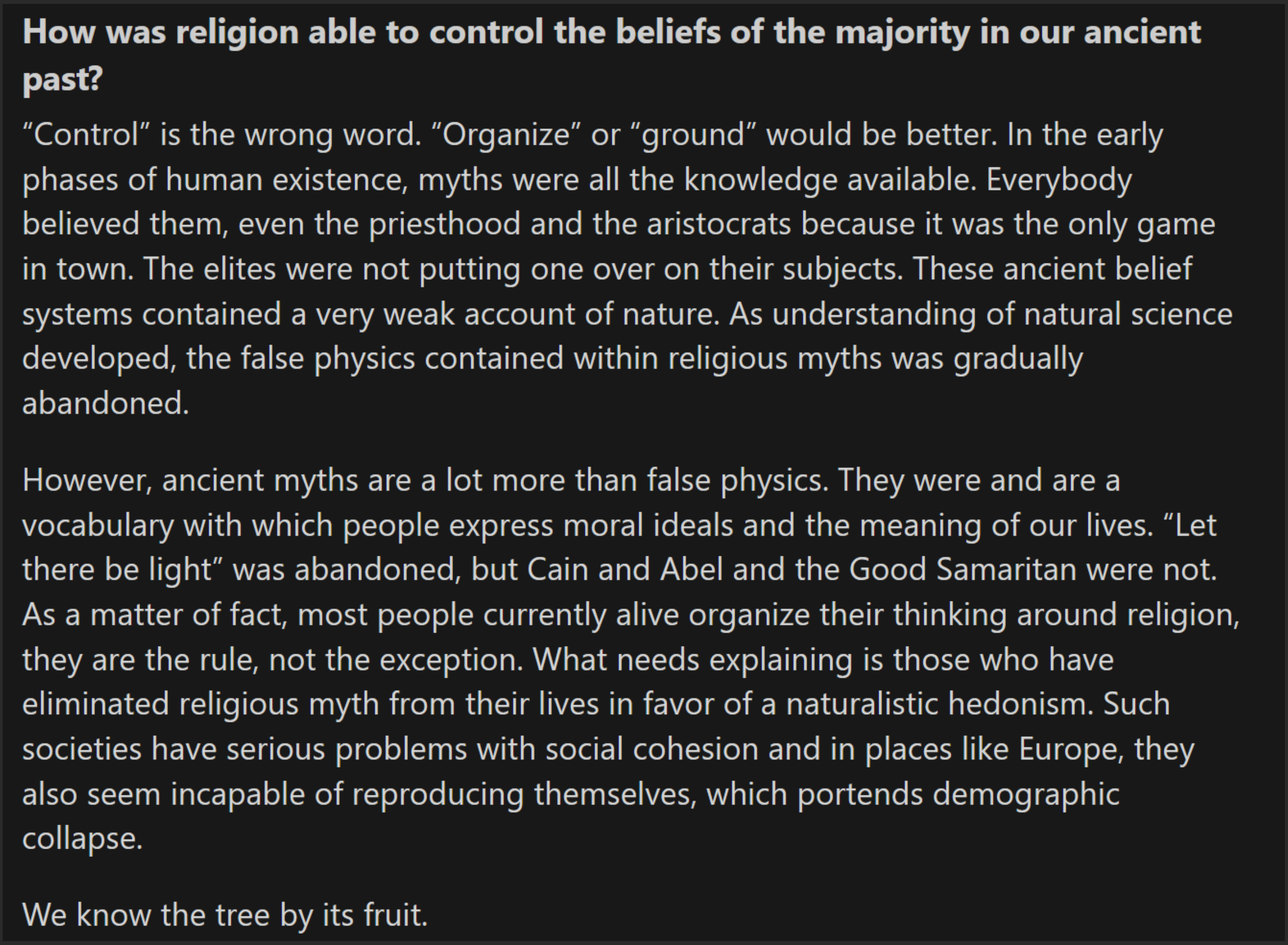
Moby Dick



What were Plato’s political views?

Plato advocated that insofar as possible, moral knowledge and political power should be combined. He called those that connected knowledge of ethics with knowledge of politics, “golden”. He distrusted democracy because it had caused his hometown, Athens, to self destruct and afterward they killed the best man in the city, Socrates. Undiscerning nitwits often vote corrupt halfwits into office, where the do great damage. Look at contemporary America.

The answer that said “timocracy” was mistaken. Timocrats are warriors who live by a code of honor. Plato called them “silver”. Plato considered that such people would not be good rulers, because courage was no substitute for wisdom. Ownership of land does not make one a timocrat. Landowners and the wealthy in general are oligarchs, those who value money over both wisdom and courage, whom Plato thinks inferior both to honorable warriors and to wise men, because avarice is no substitute for wisdom or courage.

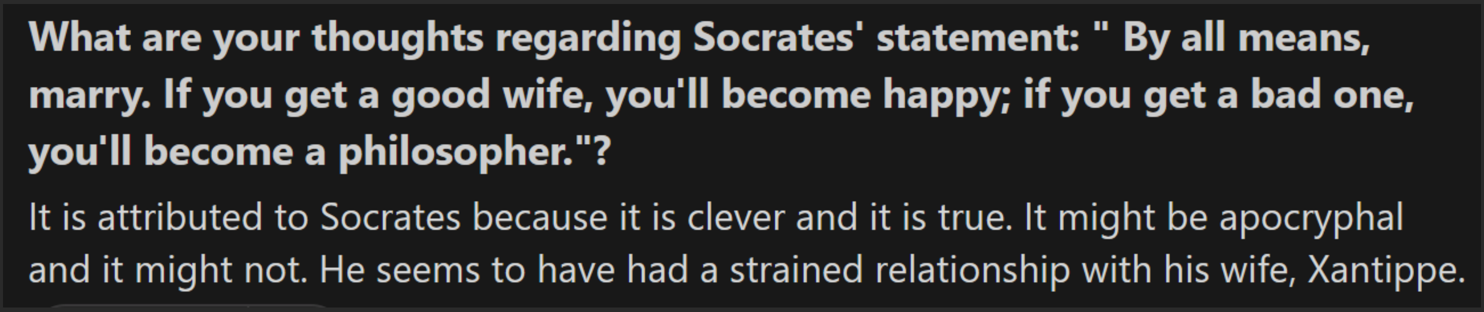


How was religion able to control the beliefs of the majority in our ancient past?

“Control” is the wrong word. “Organize” or “ground” would be better. In the early phases of human existence, myths were all the knowledge available. Everybody believed them, even the priesthood and the aristocrats because it was the only game in town. The elites were not putting one over on their subjects. These ancient belief systems contained a very weak account of nature. As understanding of natural science developed, the false physics contained within religious myths was gradually abandoned.

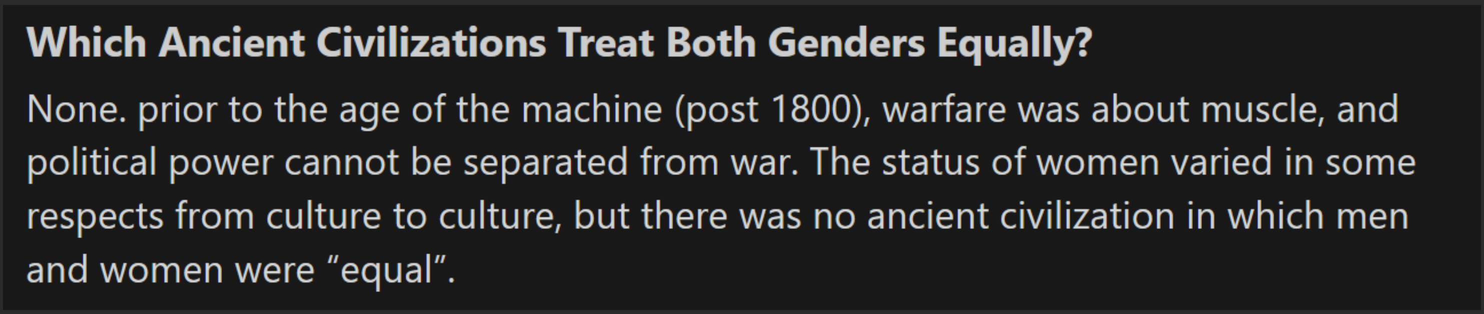
However, ancient myths are a lot more than false physics. They were and are a vocabulary with which people express moral ideals and the meaning of our lives. “Let there be light” was abandoned, but Cain and Abel and the Good Samaritan were not. As a matter of fact, most people currently alive organize their thinking around religion, they are the rule, not the exception. What needs explaining is those who have eliminated religious myth from their lives in favor of a naturalistic hedonism. Such societies have serious problems with social cohesion and in places like Europe, they also seem incapable of reproducing themselves, which portends demographic collapse.

We know the tree by its fruit.



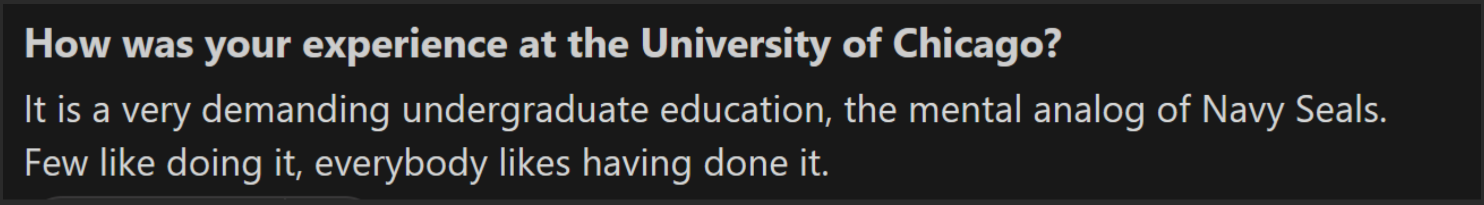
What are your thoughts regarding Socrates' statement: " By all means, marry. If you get a good wife, you'll become happy; if you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher."?

It is attributed to Socrates because it is clever and it is true. It might be apocryphal and it might not. He seems to have had a strained relationship with his wife, Xantippe.



Which Ancient Civilizations Treat Both Genders Equally?

None. prior to the age of the machine (post 1800), warfare was about muscle, and political power cannot be separated from war. The status of women varied in some respects from culture to culture, but there was no ancient civilization in which men and women were “equal”.



How was your experience at the University of Chicago?

It is a very demanding undergraduate education, the mental analog of Navy Seals. Few like doing it, everybody likes having done it.

What are the flaws in Strauss' reading of Plato's Republic?

In the Seventh Letter, Plato explicitly states that he has both an obvious doctrine and an esoteric doctrine which is not immediately obvious on the “surface” of his writing. His esoteric doctrine intended only for his best readers. Strauss claimed, dubiously, that most philosophers had esoteric doctrines, and those that did not, particularly Machiavelli and Hobbes, had committed an unforgivable intellectual transgression which inaugurated modernity, saying what should not have been said. That Plato had an esoteric doctrine is clear, what that esoteric doctrine was, I cannot say. The suggestion that Strauss believed that Plato believed that Thrasymachus was right in his claim that “justice is the advantage of the stronger”, is unknown to me. I doubt that Plato believed that. I also doubt that Strauss believed that Plato believed that. Perhaps Strauss had an esoteric doctrine of which I am unaware.

Whose is the best and the easiest translation of Plato's The Republic?

The Bloom translation is the best for the reader that has no Greek, which is nearly everybody. It is the most literal, word for word translation. In his introduction, Bloom examines critically the other extant translations into English and he is crushing. The intro is a minor masterpiece of intellectual malice. The Bloom translation is the one that I teach. The loose translations are what the translators thinks that Plato would have said if he were clever enough, which is ridiculous. If you can write a better book, write it. If not, show some fucking respect.

Why did Plato define a human as a featherless biped?

Because they lack feathers.

If childhood indoctrination was stopped, then how many of the organized religions of the world can survive?

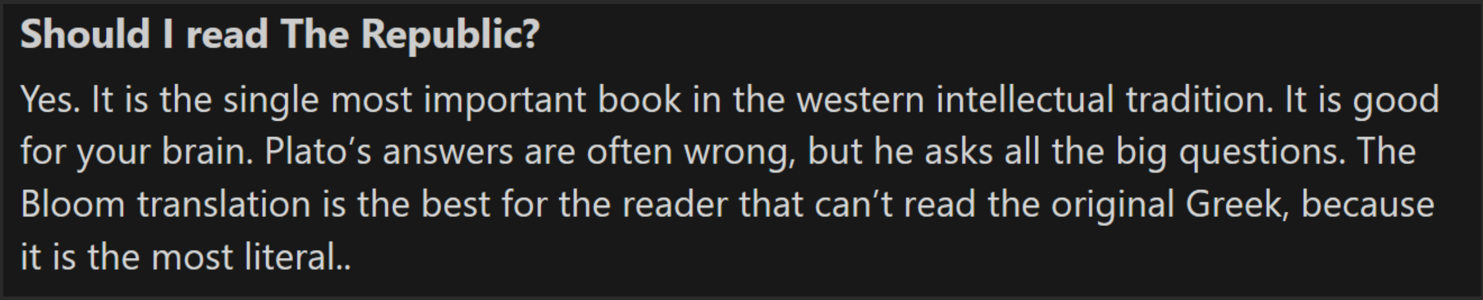
The same number of religions would survive as the number of languages, ideologies, social codes and theories of nature that would survive, Nimrod.

Didn’t the aliens do the pyramids?

No

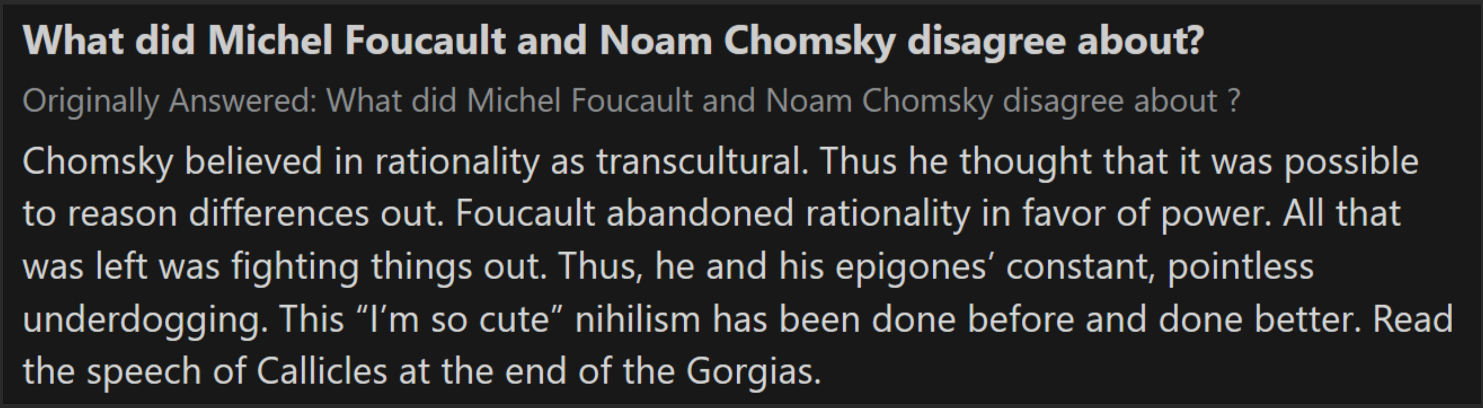
What did Socrates teach about ethics?

In the first book of the Republic, he says, “the good man does nobody any harm.”



Should I read The Republic?

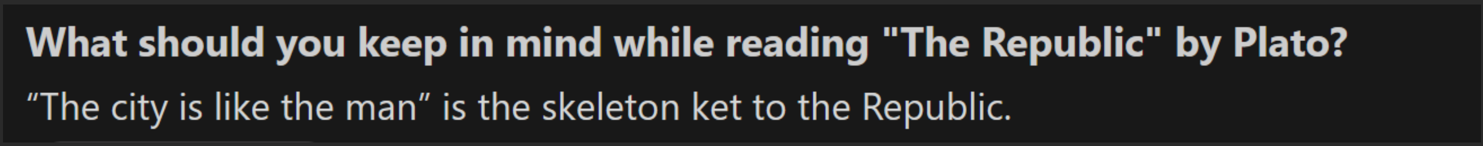
Yes. It is the single most important book in the western intellectual tradition. It is good for your brain. Plato’s answers are often wrong, but he asks all the big questions. The Bloom translation is the best for the reader that can’t read the original Greek, because it is the most literal..



What did Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky disagree about?

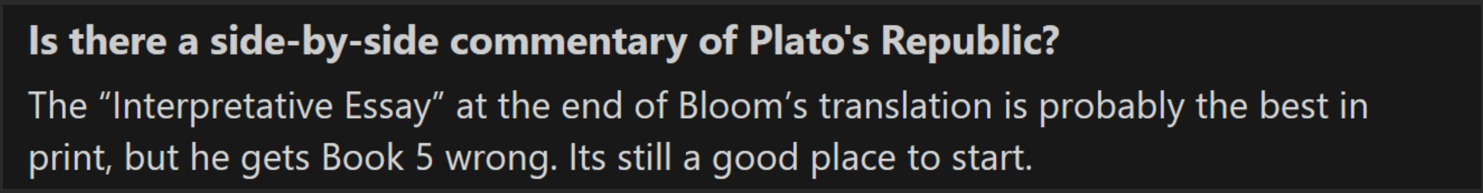
Originally Answered: What did Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky disagree about ?

Chomsky believed in rationality as transcultural. Thus he thought that it was possible to reason differences out. Foucault abandoned rationality in favor of power. All that was left was fighting things out. Thus, he and his epigones’ constant, pointless underdogging. This “I’m so cute” nihilism has been done before and done better. Read the speech of Callicles at the end of the Gorgias.



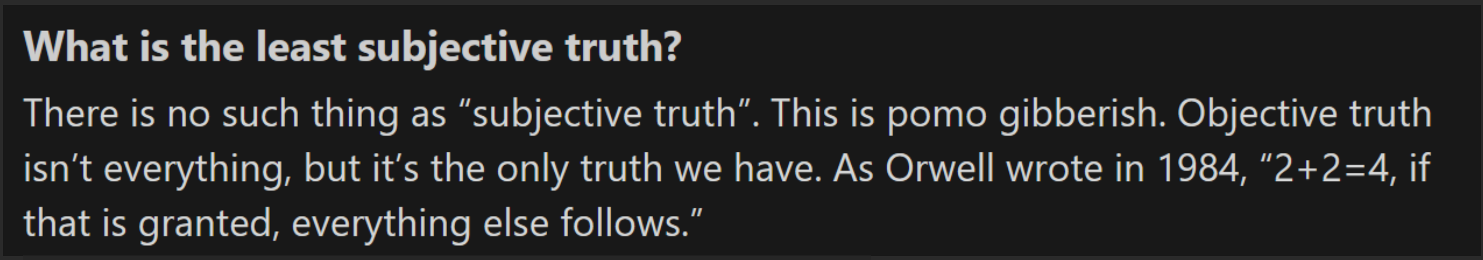
What should you keep in mind while reading "The Republic" by Plato?

“The city is like the man” is the skeleton ket to the Republic.



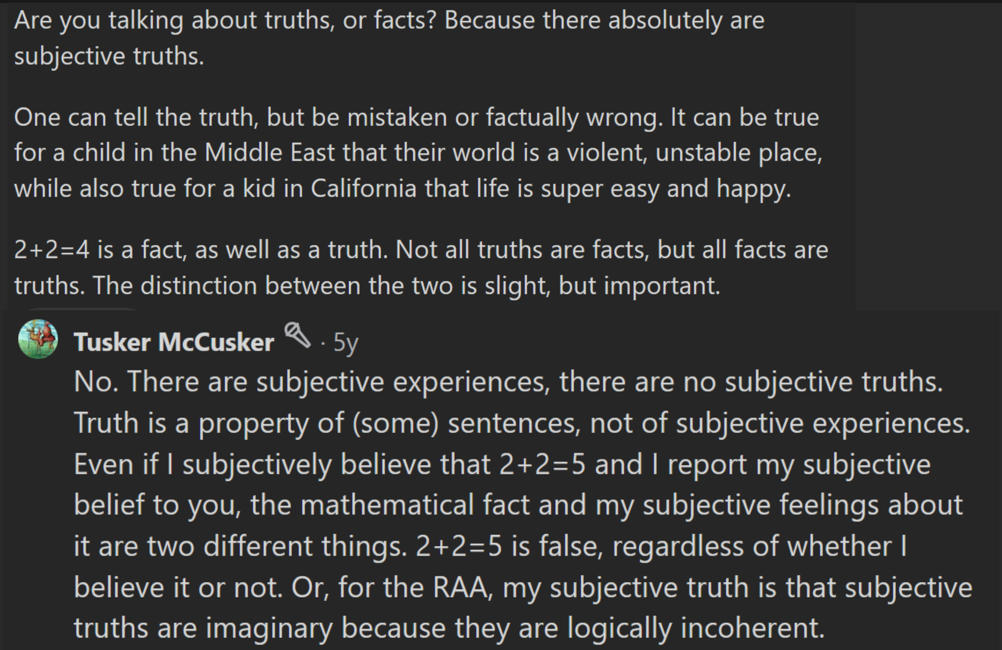
Is there a side-by-side commentary of Plato's Republic?

The “Interpretative Essay” at the end of Bloom’s translation is probably the best in print, but he gets Book 5 wrong. Its still a good place to start.



What is the least subjective truth?

There is no such thing as “subjective truth”. This is pomo gibberish. Objective truth isn’t everything, but it’s the only truth we have. As Orwell wrote in 1984, “2+2=4, if that is granted, everything else follows.”



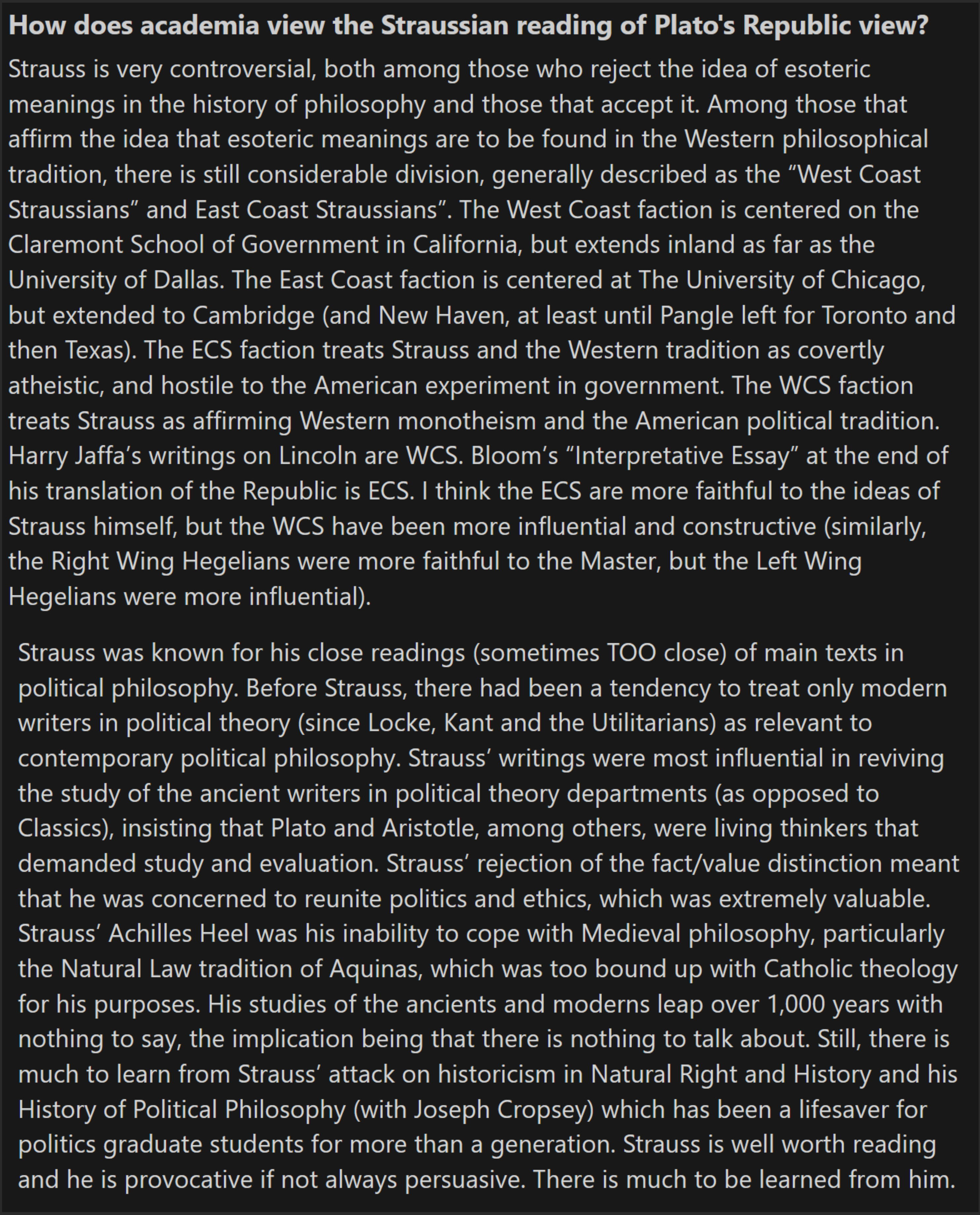
Are you talking about truths, or facts? Because there absolutely are subjective truths.

One can tell the truth, but be mistaken or factually wrong. It can be true for a child in the Middle East that their world is a violent, unstable place, while also true for a kid in California that life is super easy and happy.

2+2=4 is a fact, as well as a truth. Not all truths are facts, but all facts are truths. The distinction between the two is slight, but important.

Tusker McCusker · 5y

No. There are subjective experiences, there are no subjective truths. Truth is a property of (some) sentences, not of subjective experiences. Even if I subjectively believe that 2+2=5 and I report my subjective belief to you, the mathematical fact and my subjective feelings about it are two different things. 2+2=5 is false, regardless of whether I believe it or not. Or, for the RAA, my subjective truth is that subjective truths are imaginary because they are logically incoherent.



How does academia view the Straussian reading of Plato's Republic view?

Strauss is very controversial, both among those who reject the idea of esoteric meanings in the history of philosophy and those that accept it. Among those that affirm the idea that esoteric meanings are to be found in the Western philosophical tradition, there is still considerable division, generally described as the “West Coast Straussians“ and East Coast Straussians”. The West Coast faction is centered on the Claremont School of Government in California, but extends inland as far as the University of Dallas. The East Coast faction is centered at The University of Chicago, but extended to Cambridge (and New Haven, at least until Pangle left for Toronto and then Texas). The ECS faction treats Strauss and the Western tradition as covertly atheistic, and hostile to the American experiment in government. The WCS faction treats Strauss as affirming Western monotheism and the American political tradition. Harry Jaffa’s writings on Lincoln are WCS. Bloom’s “Interpretative Essay” at the end of his translation of the Republic is ECS. I think the ECS are more faithful to the ideas of Strauss himself, but the WCS have been more influential and constructive (similarly, the Right Wing Hegelians were more faithful to the Master, but the Left Wing Hegelians were more influential).

Strauss was known for his close readings (sometimes TOO close) of main texts in political philosophy. Before Strauss, there had been a tendency to treat only modern writers in political theory (since Locke, Kant and the Utilitarians) as relevant to contemporary political philosophy. Strauss’ writings were most influential in reviving the study of the ancient writers in political theory departments (as opposed to Classics), insisting that Plato and Aristotle, among others, were living thinkers that demanded study and evaluation. Strauss’ rejection of the fact/value distinction meant that he was concerned to reunite politics and ethics, which was extremely valuable. Strauss’ Achilles Heel was his inability to cope with Medieval philosophy, particularly the Natural Law tradition of Aquinas, which was too bound up with Catholic theology for his purposes. His studies of the ancients and moderns leap over 1,000 years with nothing to say, the implication being that there is nothing to talk about. Still, there is much to learn from Strauss’ attack on historicism in Natural Right and History and his History of Political Philosophy (with Joseph Cropsey) which has been a lifesaver for politics graduate students for more than a generation. Strauss is well worth reading and he is provocative if not always persuasive. There is much to be learned from him.

Strauss sometimes suffers from pareidolia in his excessive hunt for esoteric meanings (the central chapter in Machiavelli’s Prince may just mean what it says), but sometimes, his claims about esoteric meanings are clearly correct. Plato wrote in the Seventh Letter that his dialogues has hidden doctrines, and Strauss was right in taking that idea seriously. The best evaluation of Strauss I’ve seen is that given to an undergraduate who claimed that Strauss had an esoteric doctrine of his own, “That’s what he WANTS you to believe, on a superficial first reading…”

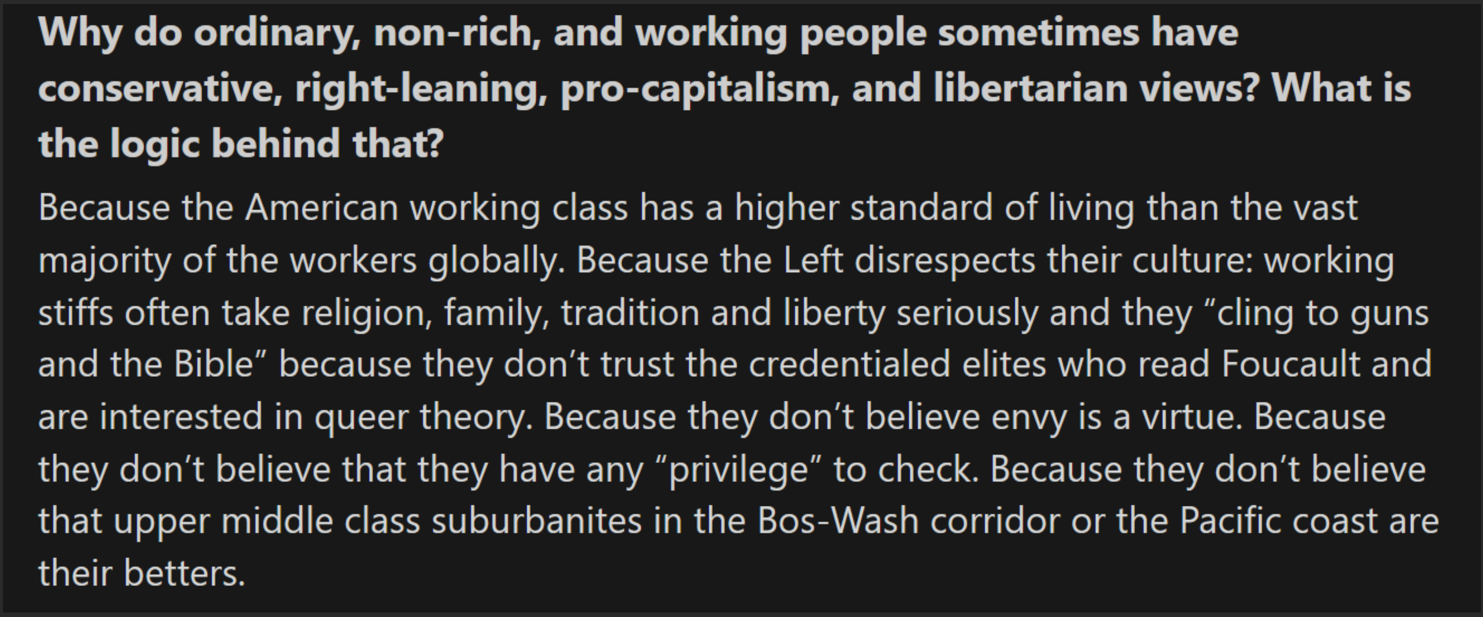
How much better are the academics at Columbia than at the University of Chicago?

I attended both. BA Chicago, PhD Columbia. They are different but comparable. CU has more practical programs like engineering and the NYC connections are helpful in myriad ways. CU is also extremely leftwing, both in faculty, students and general campus climate. SJWs routinely smother ideological challenges and the administration looks the other way. It is a political echo chamber and he range of acceptable opinions is narrow.

U of C is correctly called “the Teacher of Teachers”, the education is oriented toward producing intellectuals. Undergrad at U of C is much more demanding than at CU (I taught 5 years at CU as well), grad programs about equally rigorous. The U of C administration will not tolerate mob actions by students that are “offended” or “threatened” by speakers they disagree with. U of C is liberal in an old fashioned way. There is more ideological conflict at U of C. Recently, U of C abolished the previously required SAT and ACT exams for undergraduate admission. They claimed that this was about “fairness” and “diversity” (they are trying to admit more black and hispanic students and they are trying to reduce the number of asians) but they are deathly afraid of being sued (like Harvard was) over these “holistic” admissions. They are eliminating the standardized tests so there is no metric which will reveal the differential standards for admission.

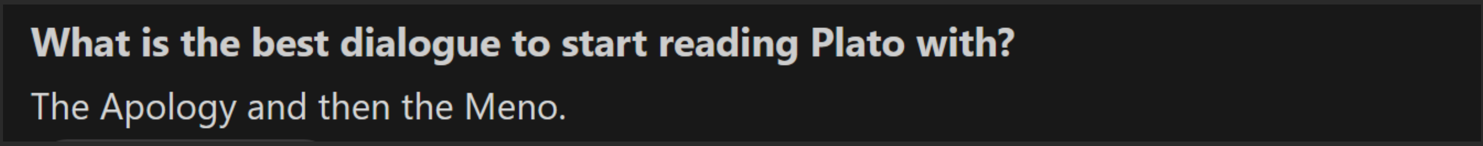
Were there any early civilizations that used physics?

All of them used “physics”, but their scientific theories, like all their other beliefs, were coded into myths. If you think the Nile river or an epidemic disease or an earthquake is a a spirit that can be communicated with, singing songs, repeating incantations, sacrificing oxen and such makes perfectly good sense. Religious ritual is the original, alas not very effective, kind of technology.



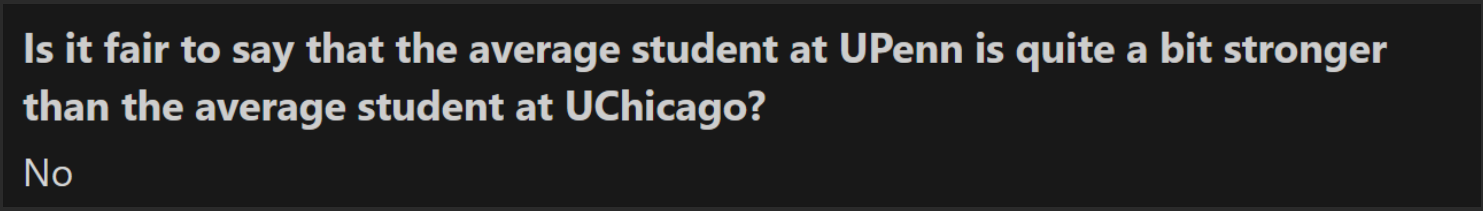
Why do ordinary, non-rich, and working people sometimes have conservative, right-leaning, pro-capitalism, and libertarian views? What is the logic behind that?

Because the American working class has a higher standard of living than the vast majority of the workers globally. Because the Left disrespects their culture: working stiffs often take religion, family, tradition and liberty seriously and they “cling to guns and the Bible” because they don’t trust the credentialed elites who read Foucault and are interested in queer theory. Because they don’t believe envy is a virtue. Because they don’t believe that they have any “privilege” to check. Because they don’t believe that upper middle class suburbanites in the Bos-Wash corridor or the Pacific coast are their betters.



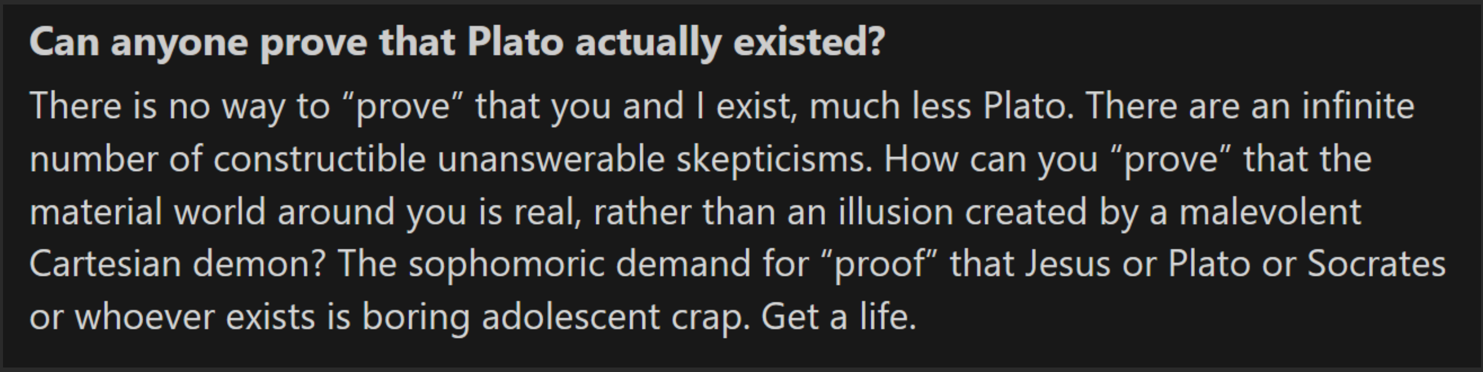
What is the best dialogue to start reading Plato with?

The Apology and then the Meno.



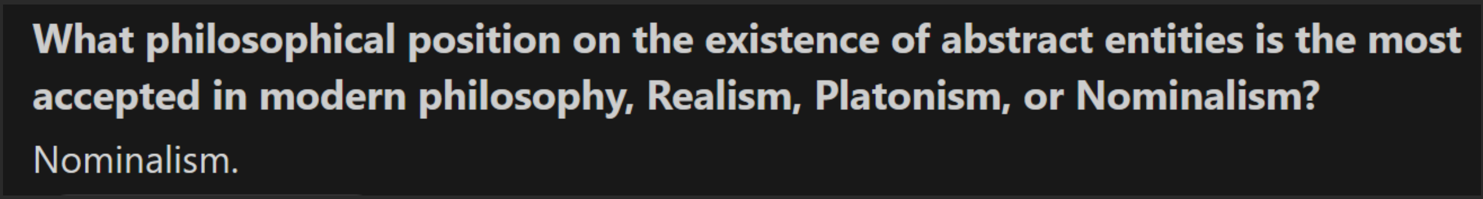
Is it fair to say that the average student at UPenn is quite a bit stronger than the average student at UChicago?

No



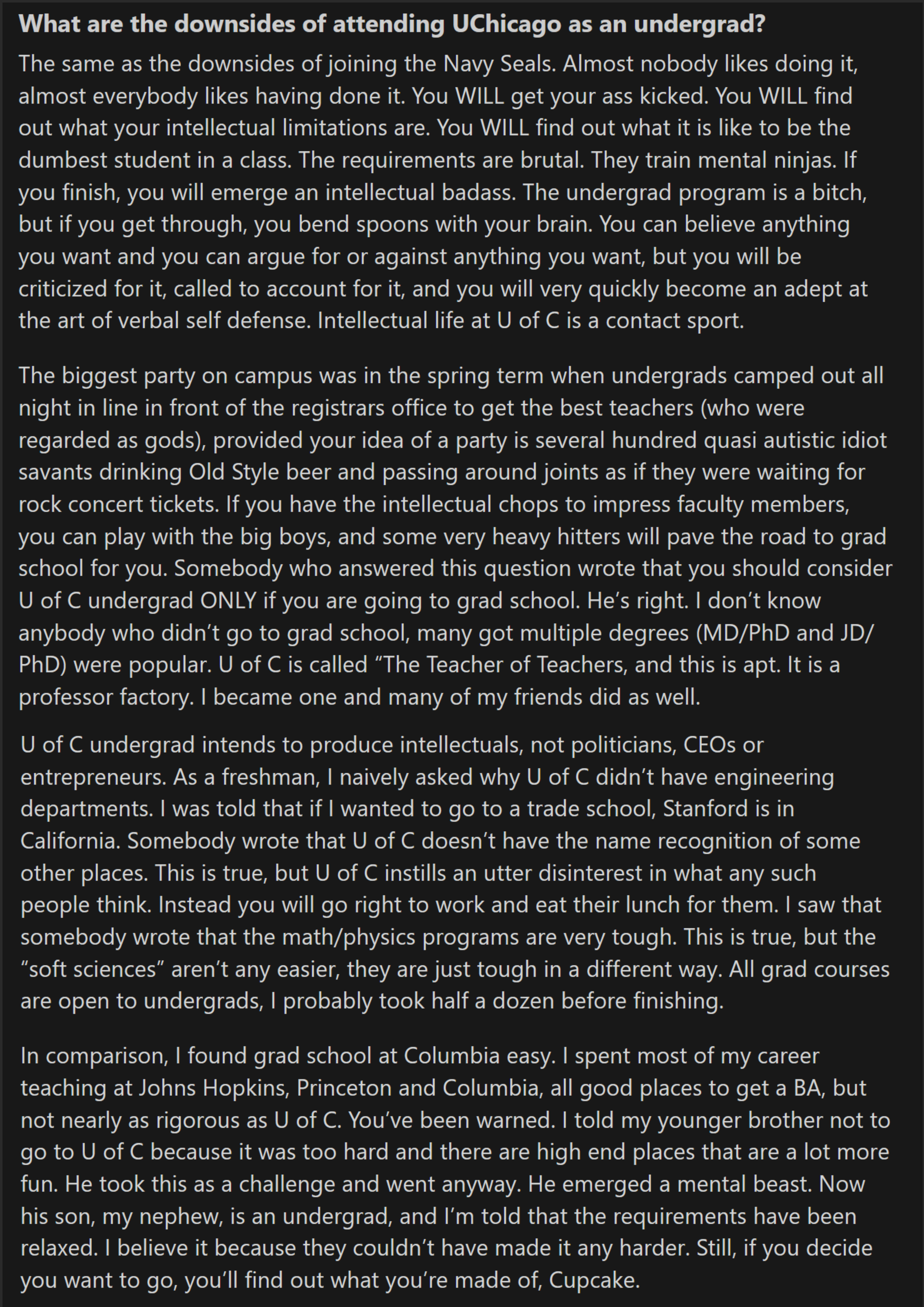
Can anyone prove that Plato actually existed?

There is no way to “prove” that you and I exist, much less Plato. There are an infinite number of constructible unanswerable skepticisms. How can you “prove” that the material world around you is real, rather than an illusion created by a malevolent Cartesian demon? The sophomoric demand for “proof” that Jesus or Plato or Socrates or whoever exists is boring adolescent crap. Get a life.



What philosophical position on the existence of abstract entities is the most accepted in modern philosophy, Realism, Platonism, or Nominalism?

Nominalism.



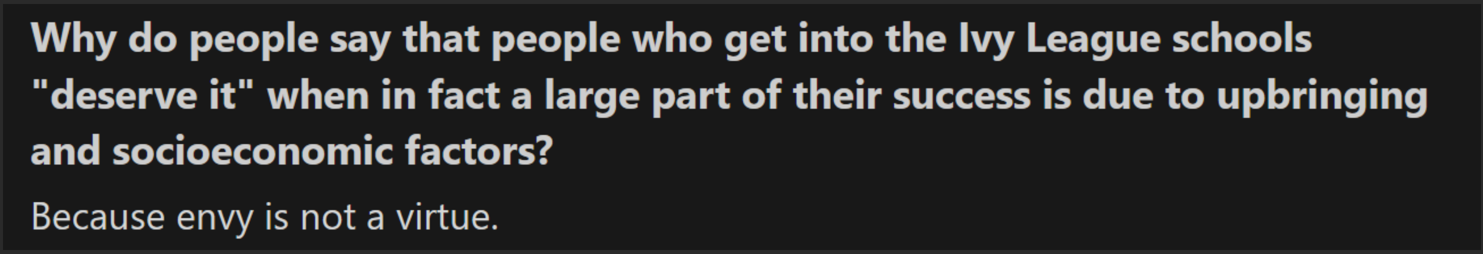
What are the downsides of attending UChicago as an undergrad?

The same as the downsides of joining the Navy Seals. Almost nobody likes doing it, almost everybody likes having done it. You WILL get your ass kicked. You WILL find out what your intellectual limitations are. You WILL find out what it is like to be the dumbest student in a class. The requirements are brutal. They train mental ninjas. If you finish, you will emerge an intellectual badass. The undergrad program is a bitch, but if you get through, you bend spoons with your brain. You can believe anything you want and you can argue for or against anything you want, but you will be criticized for it, called to account for it, and you will very quickly become an adept at the art of verbal self defense. Intellectual life at U of C is a contact sport.

The biggest party on campus was in the spring term when undergrads camped out all night in line in front of the registrars office to get the best teachers (who were regarded as gods), provided your idea of a party is several hundred quasi autistic idiot savants drinking Old Style beer and passing around joints as if they were waiting for rock concert tickets. If you have the intellectual chops to impress faculty members, you can play with the big boys, and some very heavy hitters will pave the road to grad school for you. Somebody who answered this question wrote that you should consider U of C undergrad ONLY if you are going to grad school. He's right. I don't know anybody who didn't go to grad school, many got multiple degrees (MD/PhD and JD/PhD) were popular. U of C is called "The Teacher of Teachers, and this is apt. It is a professor factory. I became one and many of my friends did as well.

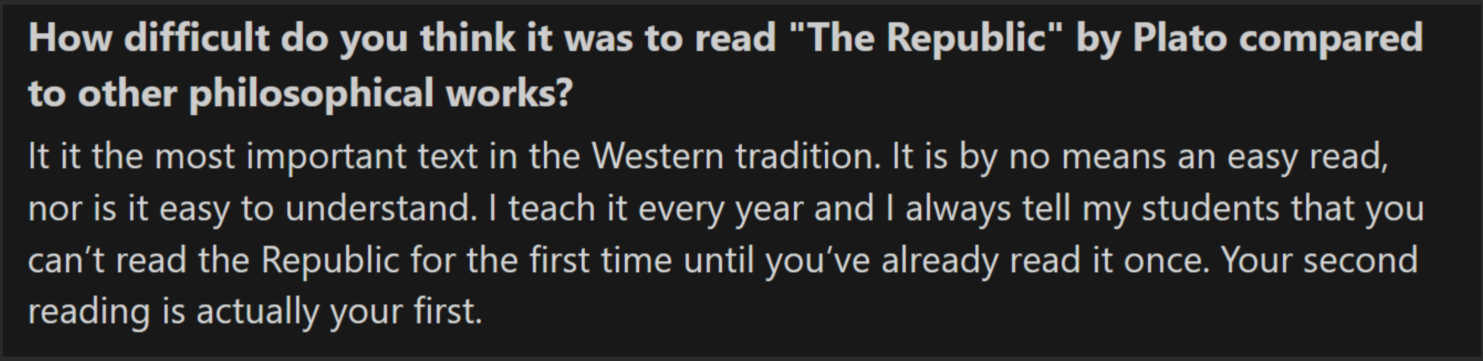
U of C undergrad intends to produce intellectuals, not politicians, CEOs or entrepreneurs. As a freshman, I naively asked why U of C didn't have engineering departments. I was told that if I wanted to go to a trade school, Stanford is in California. Somebody wrote that U of C doesn't have the name recognition of some other places. This is true, but U of C instills an utter disinterest in what any such people think. Instead you will go right to work and eat their lunch for them. I saw that somebody wrote that the math/physics programs are very tough. This is true, but the "soft sciences" aren't any easier, they are just tough in a different way. All grad courses are open to undergrads, I probably took half a dozen before finishing.

In comparison, I found grad school at Columbia easy. I spent most of my career teaching at Johns Hopkins, Princeton and Columbia, all good places to get a BA, but not nearly as rigorous as U of C. You've been warned. I told my younger brother not to go to U of C because it was too hard and there are high end places that are a lot more fun. He took this as a challenge and went anyway. He emerged a mental beast. Now his son, my nephew, is an undergrad, and I'm told that the requirements have been relaxed. I believe it because they couldn't have made it any harder. Still, if you decide you want to go, you'll find out what you're made of, Cupcake.



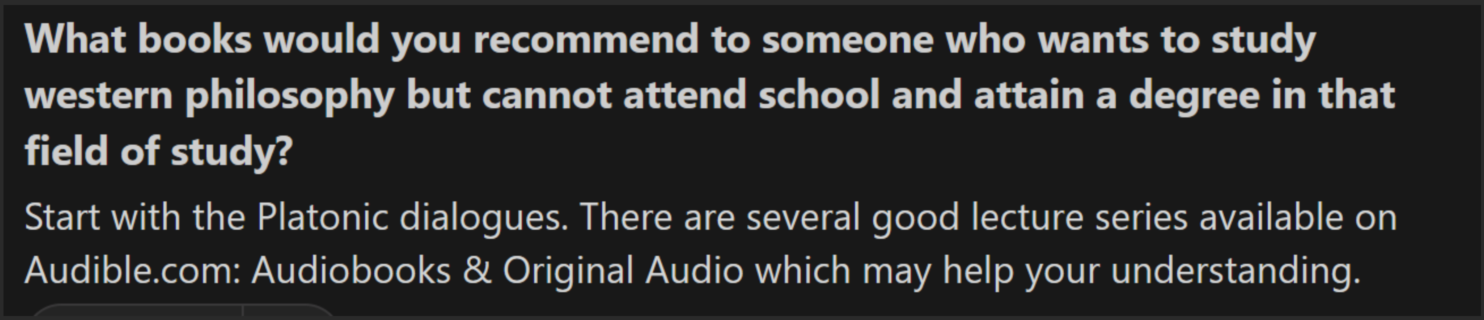
Why do people say that people who get into the Ivy League schools "deserve it" when in fact a large part of their success is due to upbringing and socioeconomic factors?

Because envy is not a virtue.



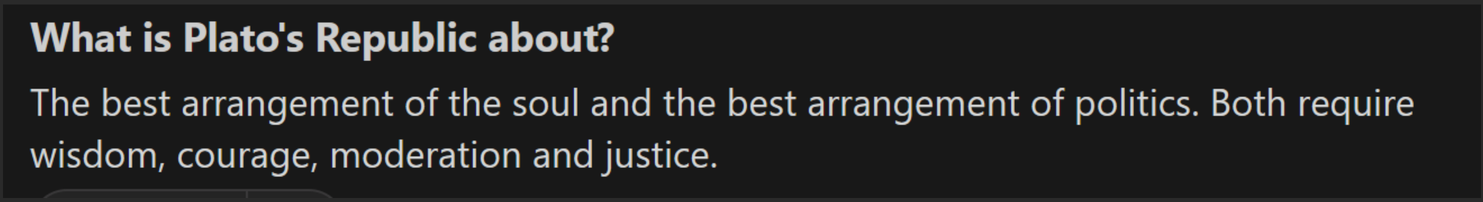
How difficult do you think it was to read "The Republic" by Plato compared to other philosophical works?

It it the most important text in the Western tradition. It is by no means an easy read, nor is it easy to understand. I teach it every year and I always tell my students that you can’t read the Republic for the first time until you’ve already read it once. Your second reading is actually your first.



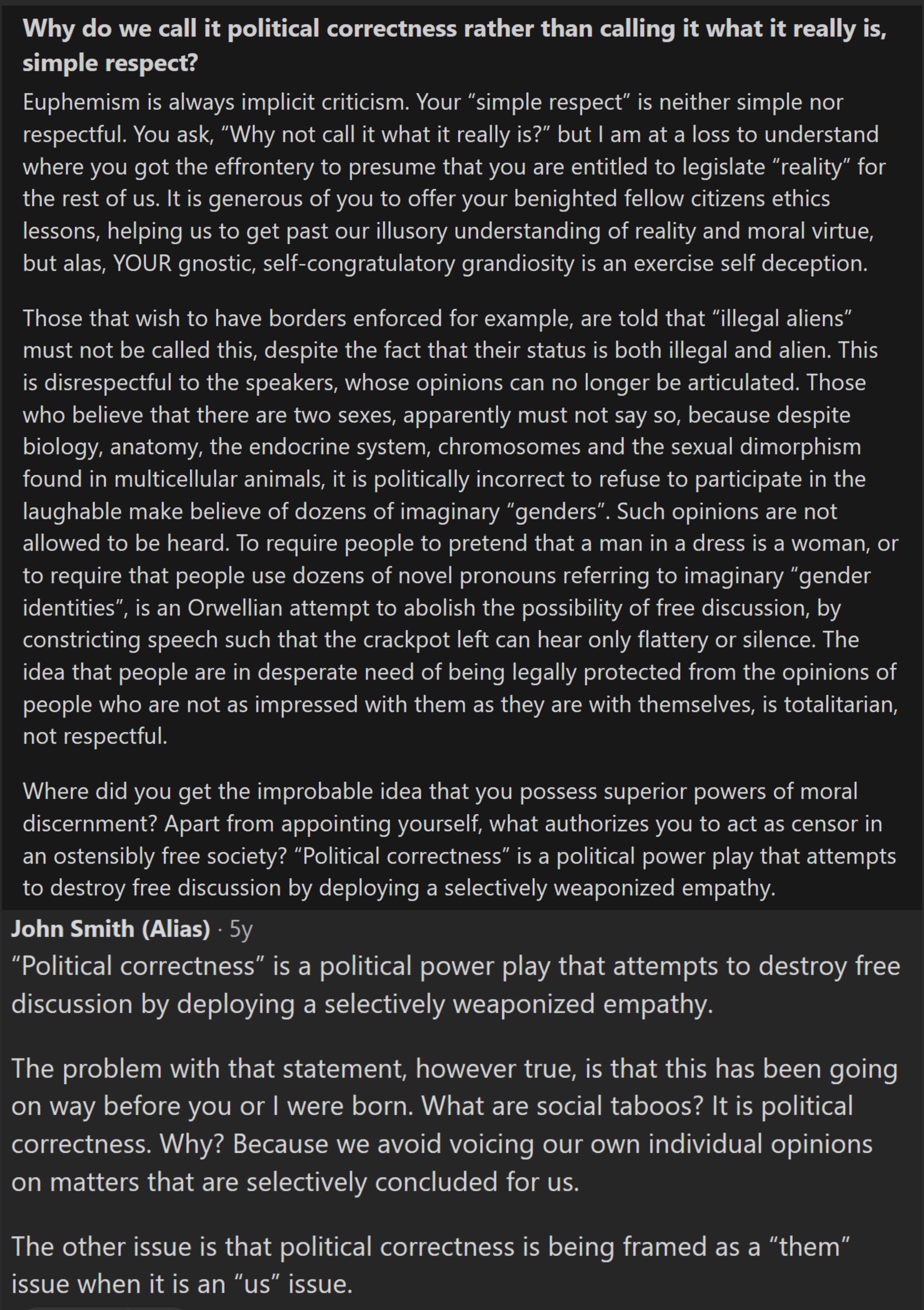
What books would you recommend to someone who wants to study western philosophy but cannot attend school and attain a degree in that field of study?

Start with the Platonic dialogues. There are several good lecture series available on Audible.com: Audiobooks & Original Audio which may help your understanding.



What is Plato's Republic about?

The best arrangement of the soul and the best arrangement of politics. Both require wisdom, courage, moderation and justice.



Why do we call it political correctness rather than calling it what it really is, simple respect?

Euphemism is always implicit criticism. Your “simple respect” is neither simple nor respectful. You ask, “Why not call it what it really is?” but I am at a loss to understand where you got the effrontery to presume that you are entitled to legislate “reality” for the rest of us. It is generous of you to offer your benighted fellow citizens ethics lessons, helping us to get past our illusory understanding of reality and moral virtue, but alas, YOUR gnostic, self-congratulatory grandiosity is an exercise self deception.

Those that wish to have borders enforced for example, are told that “illegal aliens” must not be called this, despite the fact that their status is both illegal and alien. This is disrespectful to the speakers, whose opinions can no longer be articulated. Those who believe that there are two sexes, apparently must not say so, because despite biology, anatomy, the endocrine system, chromosomes and the sexual dimorphism found in multicellular animals, it is politically incorrect to refuse to participate in the laughable make believe of dozens of imaginary “genders”. Such opinions are not allowed to be heard. To require people to pretend that a man in a dress is a woman, or to require that people use dozens of novel pronouns referring to imaginary “gender identities”, is an Orwellian attempt to abolish the possibility of free discussion, by constricting speech such that the crackpot left can hear only flattery or silence. The idea that people are in desperate need of being legally protected from the opinions of people who are not as impressed with them as they are with themselves, is totalitarian, not respectful.

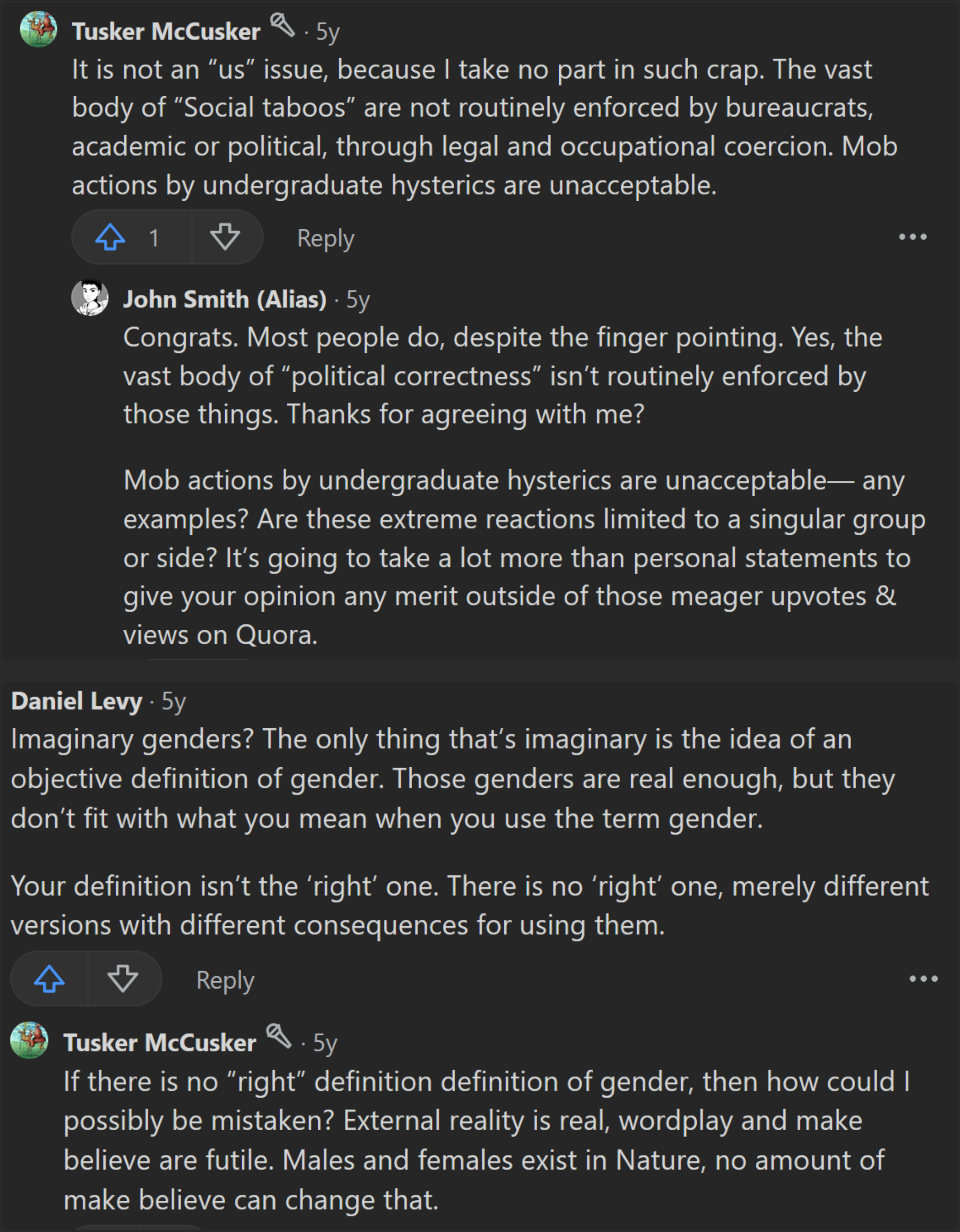
Where did you get the improbable idea that you possess superior powers of moral discernment? Apart from appointing yourself, what authorizes you to act as censor in an ostensibly free society? “Political correctness” is a political power play that attempts to destroy free discussion by deploying a selectively weaponized empathy.

John Smith (Alias) · 5y

“Political correctness” is a political power play that attempts to destroy free discussion by deploying a selectively weaponized empathy.

The problem with that statement, however true, is that this has been going on way before you or I were born. What are social taboos? It is political correctness. Why? Because we avoid voicing our own individual opinions on matters that are selectively concluded for us.

The other issue is that political correctness is being framed as a “them” issue when it is an “us” issue.



Tusker McCusker · 5y

It is not an “us” issue, because I take no part in such crap. The vast body of “Social taboos” are not routinely enforced by bureaucrats, academic or political, through legal and occupational coercion. Mob actions by undergraduate hysterics are unacceptable.

John Smith (Alias) · 5y

Congrats. Most people do, despite the finger pointing. Yes, the vast body of “political correctness” isn’t routinely enforced by those things. Thanks for agreeing with me?

Mob actions by undergraduate hysterics are unacceptable— any examples? Are these extreme reactions limited to a singular group or side? It’s going to take a lot more than personal statements to give your opinion any merit outside of those meager upvotes & views on Quora.

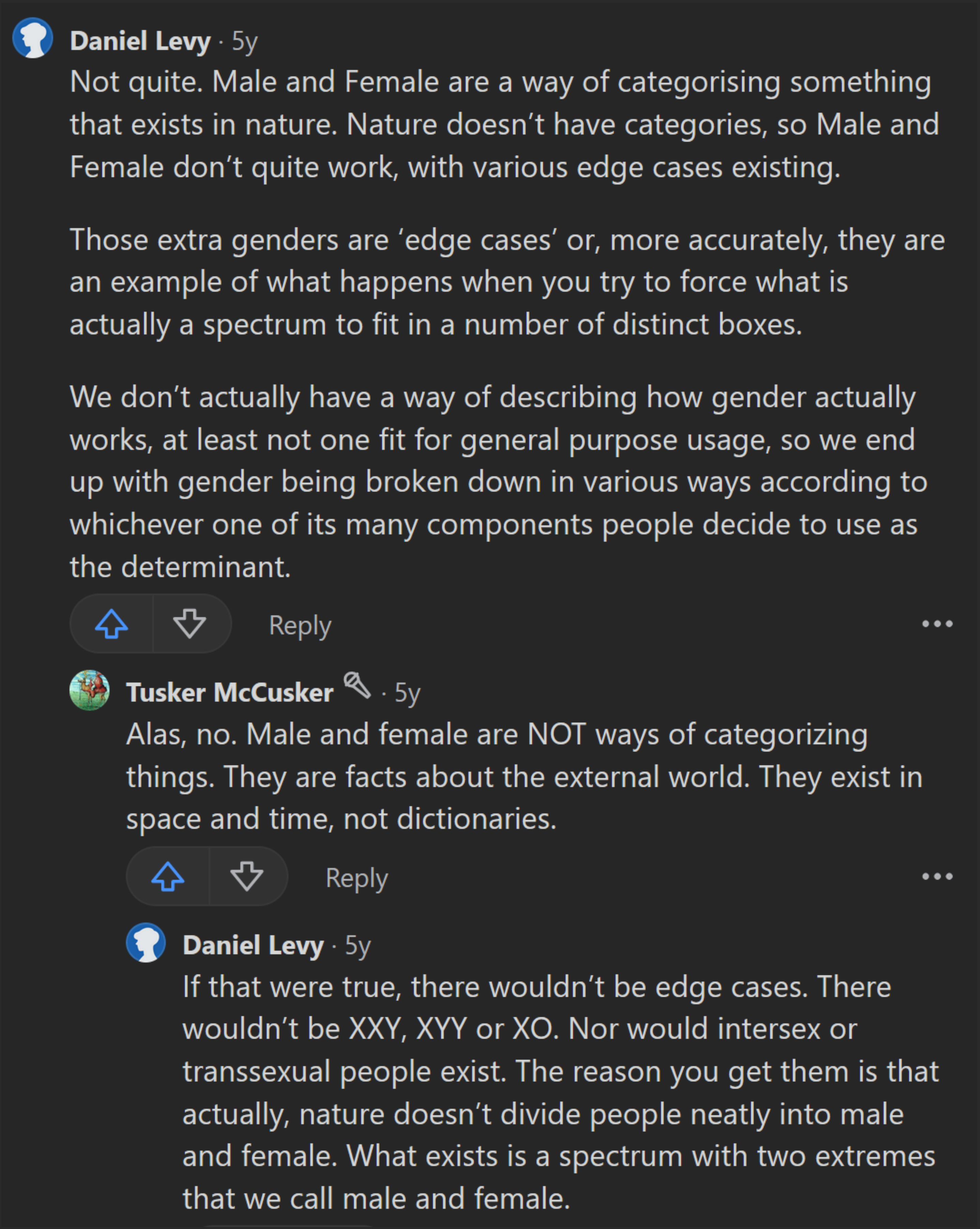
Daniel Levy · 5y

Imaginary genders? The only thing that’s imaginary is the idea of an objective definition of gender. Those genders are real enough, but they don’t fit with what you mean when you use the term gender.

Your definition isn’t the ‘right’ one. There is no ‘right’ one, merely different versions with different consequences for using them.

Tusker McCusker · 5y

If there is no “right” definition definition of gender, then how could I possibly be mistaken? External reality is real, wordplay and make believe are futile. Males and females exist in Nature, no amount of make believe can change that.



Daniel Levy · 5y

Not quite. Male and Female are a way of categorising something that exists in nature. Nature doesn't have categories, so Male and Female don't quite work, with various edge cases existing.

Those extra genders are 'edge cases' or, more accurately, they are an example of what happens when you try to force what is actually a spectrum to fit in a number of distinct boxes.

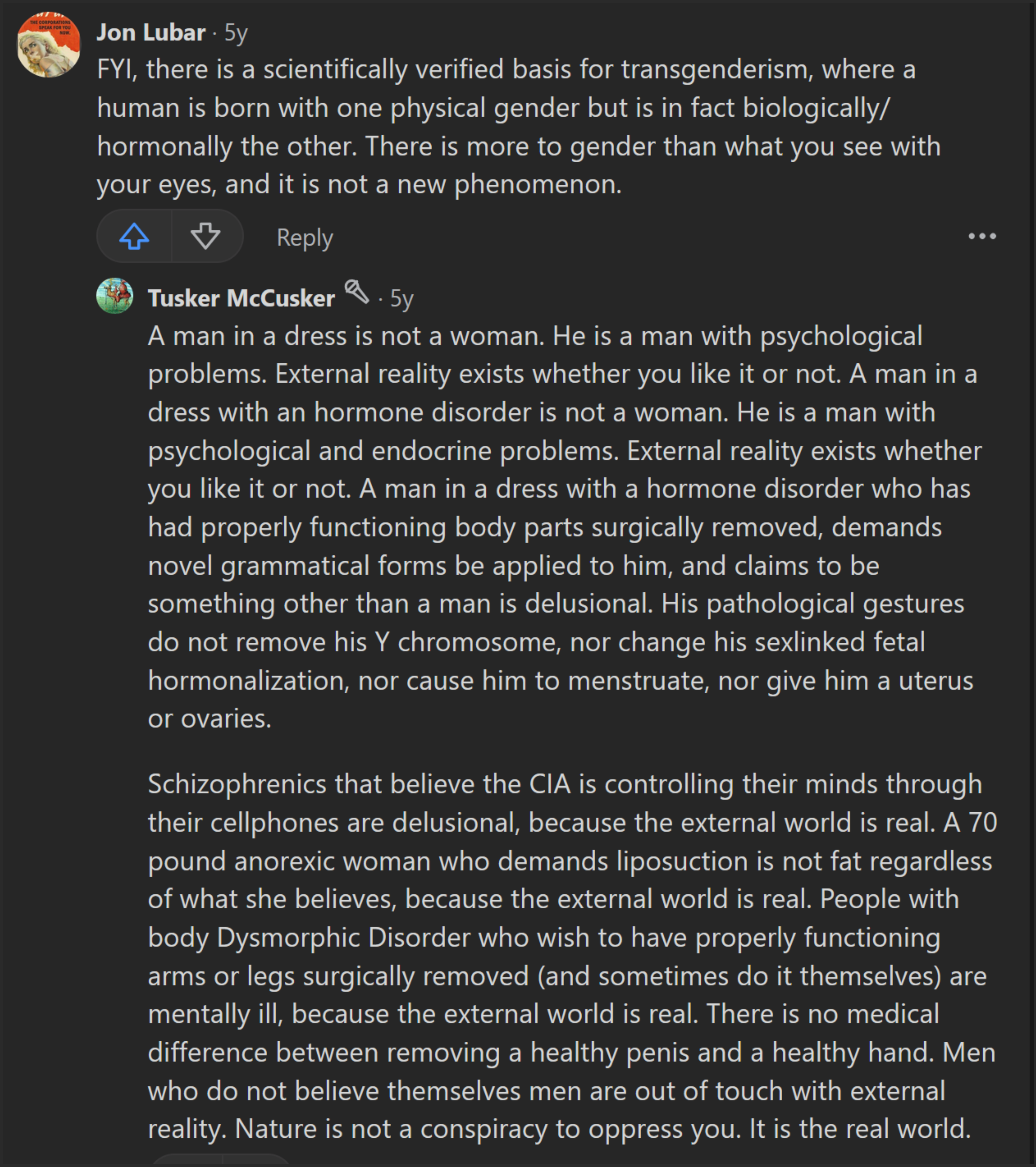
We don't actually have a way of describing how gender actually works, at least not one fit for general purpose usage, so we end up with gender being broken down in various ways according to whichever one of its many components people decide to use as the determinant.

Tusker McCusker · 5y

Alas, no. Male and female are NOT ways of categorizing things. They are facts about the external world. They exist in space and time, not dictionaries.

Daniel Levy · 5y

If that were true, there wouldn't be edge cases. There wouldn't be XXY, XYY or XO. Nor would intersex or transsexual people exist. The reason you get them is that actually, nature doesn't divide people neatly into male and female. What exists is a spectrum with two extremes that we call male and female.



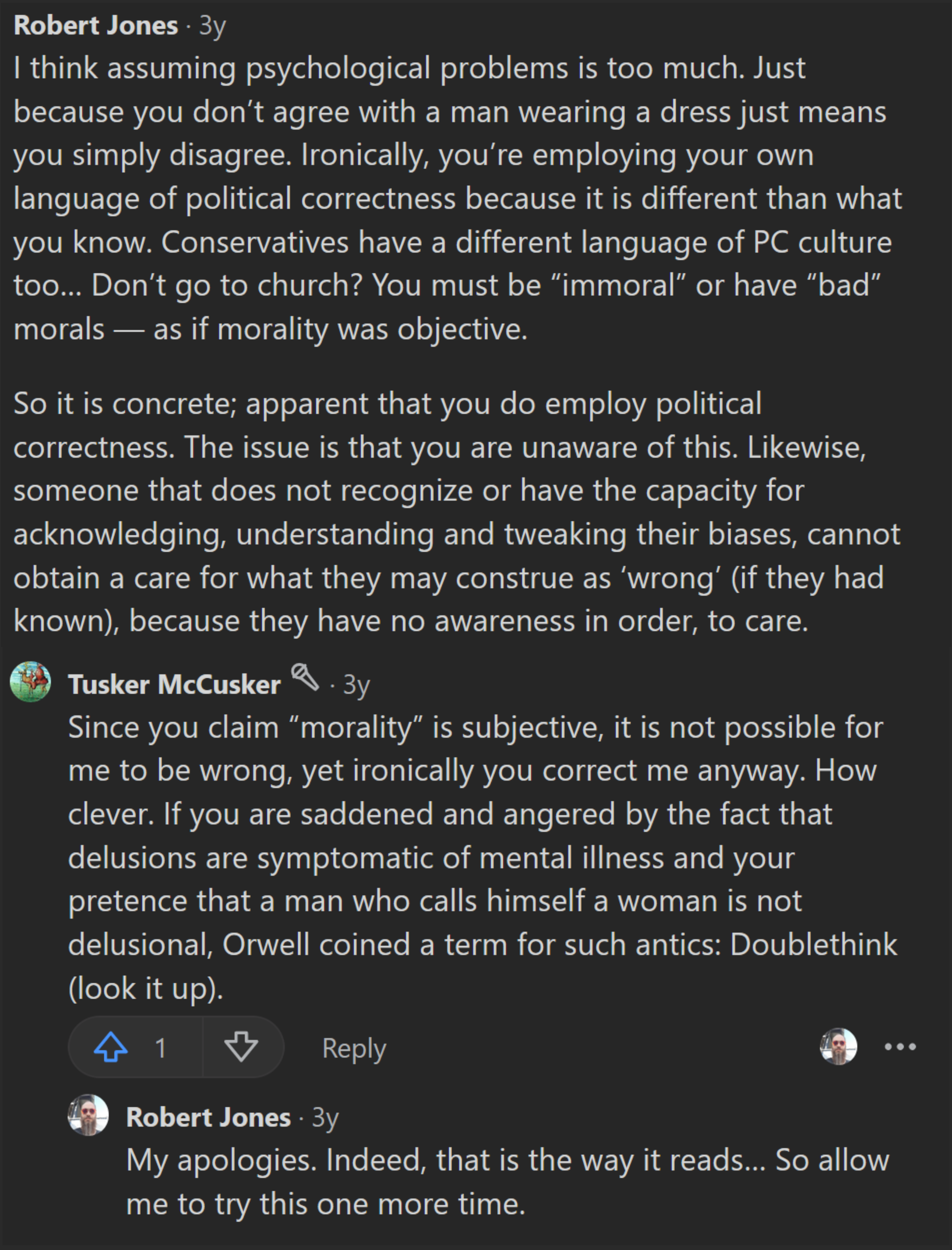
Jon Lubar · 5y

FYI, there is a scientifically verified basis for transgenderism, where a human is born with one physical gender but is in fact biologically/hormonally the other. There is more to gender than what you see with your eyes, and it is not a new phenomenon.

Tusker McCusker · 5y

A man in a dress is not a woman. He is a man with psychological problems. External reality exists whether you like it or not. A man in a dress with an hormone disorder is not a woman. He is a man with psychological and endocrine problems. External reality exists whether you like it or not. A man in a dress with a hormone disorder who has had properly functioning body parts surgically removed, demands novel grammatical forms be applied to him, and claims to be something other than a man is delusional. His pathological gestures do not remove his Y chromosome, nor change his sexlinked fetal hormonalization, nor cause him to menstruate, nor give him a uterus or ovaries.

Schizophrenics that believe the CIA is controlling their minds through their cellphones are delusional, because the external world is real. A 70 pound anorexic woman who demands liposuction is not fat regardless of what she believes, because the external world is real. People with body Dysmorphic Disorder who wish to have properly functioning arms or legs surgically removed (and sometimes do it themselves) are mentally ill, because the external world is real. There is no medical difference between removing a healthy penis and a healthy hand. Men who do not believe themselves men are out of touch with external reality. Nature is not a conspiracy to oppress you. It is the real world.



Robert Jones · 3y

I think assuming psychological problems is too much. Just because you don’t agree with a man wearing a dress just means you simply disagree. Ironically, you’re employing your own language of political correctness because it is different than what you know. Conservatives have a different language of PC culture too… Don’t go to church? You must be “immoral” or have “bad” morals — as if morality was objective.

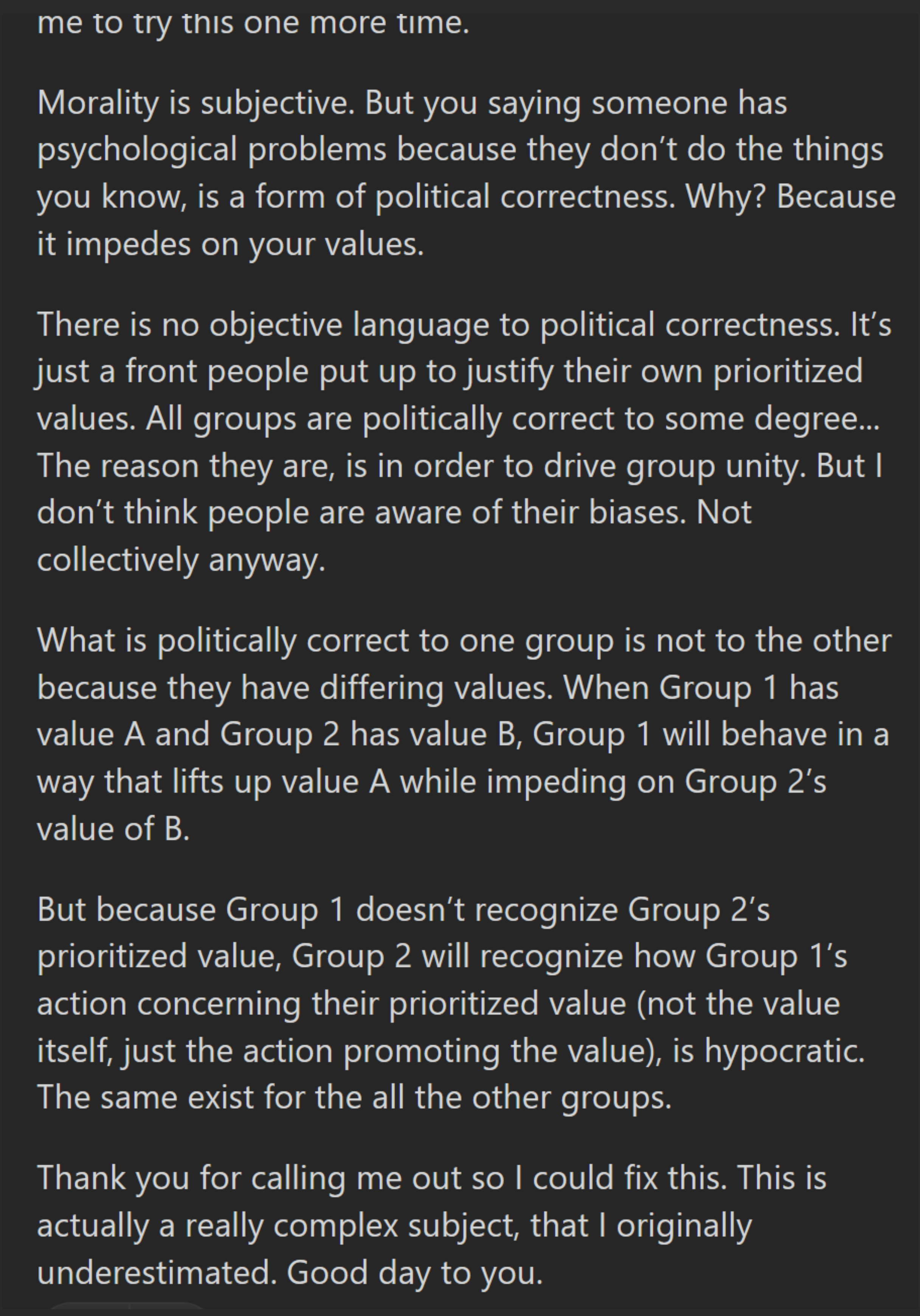
So it is concrete; apparent that you do employ political correctness. The issue is that you are unaware of this. Likewise, someone that does not recognize or have the capacity for acknowledging, understanding and tweaking their biases, cannot obtain a care for what they may construe as ‘wrong’ (if they had known), because they have no awareness in order, to care.

Tusker McCusker · 3y

Since you claim “morality” is subjective, it is not possible for me to be wrong, yet ironically you correct me anyway. How clever. If you are saddened and angered by the fact that delusions are symptomatic of mental illness and your pretence that a man who calls himself a woman is not delusional, Orwell coined a term for such antics: Doublethink (look it up).

Robert Jones · 3y

My apologies. Indeed, that is the way it reads… So allow me to try this one more time.



me to try this one more time.

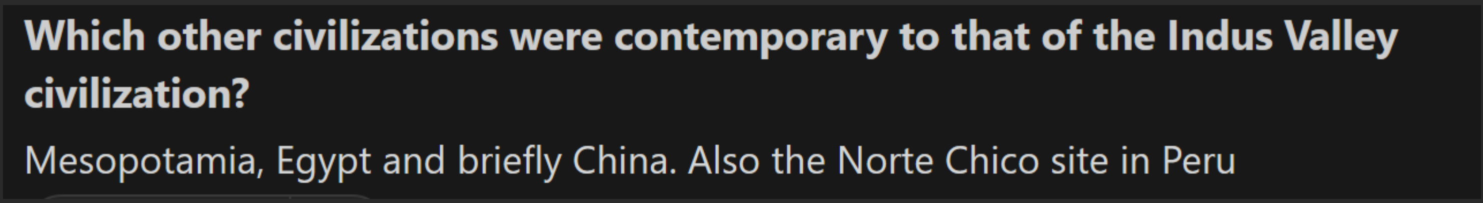
Morality is subjective. But you saying someone has psychological problems because they don’t do the things you know, is a form of political correctness. Why? Because it impedes on your values.

There is no objective language to political correctness. It’s just a front people put up to justify their own prioritized values. All groups are politically correct to some degree... The reason they are, is in order to drive group unity. But I don’t think people are aware of their biases. Not collectively anyway.

What is politically correct to one group is not to the other because they have differing values. When Group 1 has value A and Group 2 has value B, Group 1 will behave in a way that lifts up value A while impeding on Group 2’s value of B.

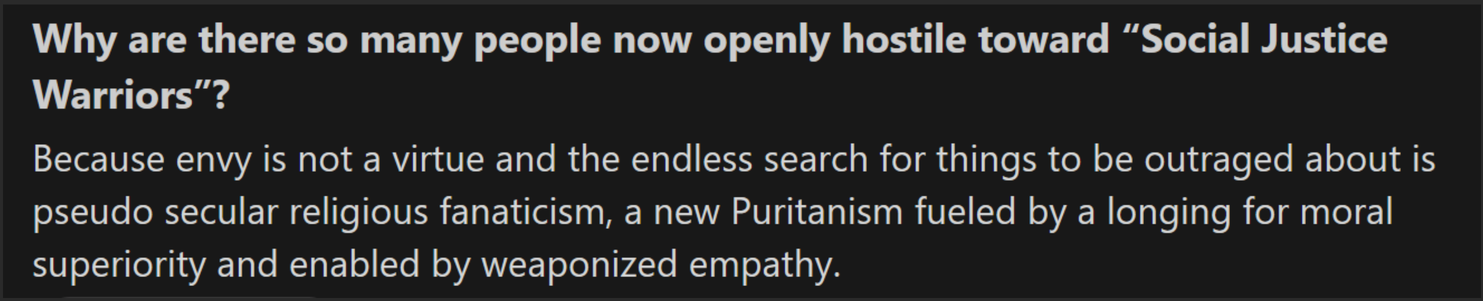
But because Group 1 doesn’t recognize Group 2’s prioritized value, Group 2 will recognize how Group 1’s action concerning their prioritized value (not the value itself, just the action promoting the value), is hypocratic. The same exist for the all the other groups.

Thank you for calling me out so I could fix this. This is actually a really complex subject, that I originally underestimated. Good day to you.



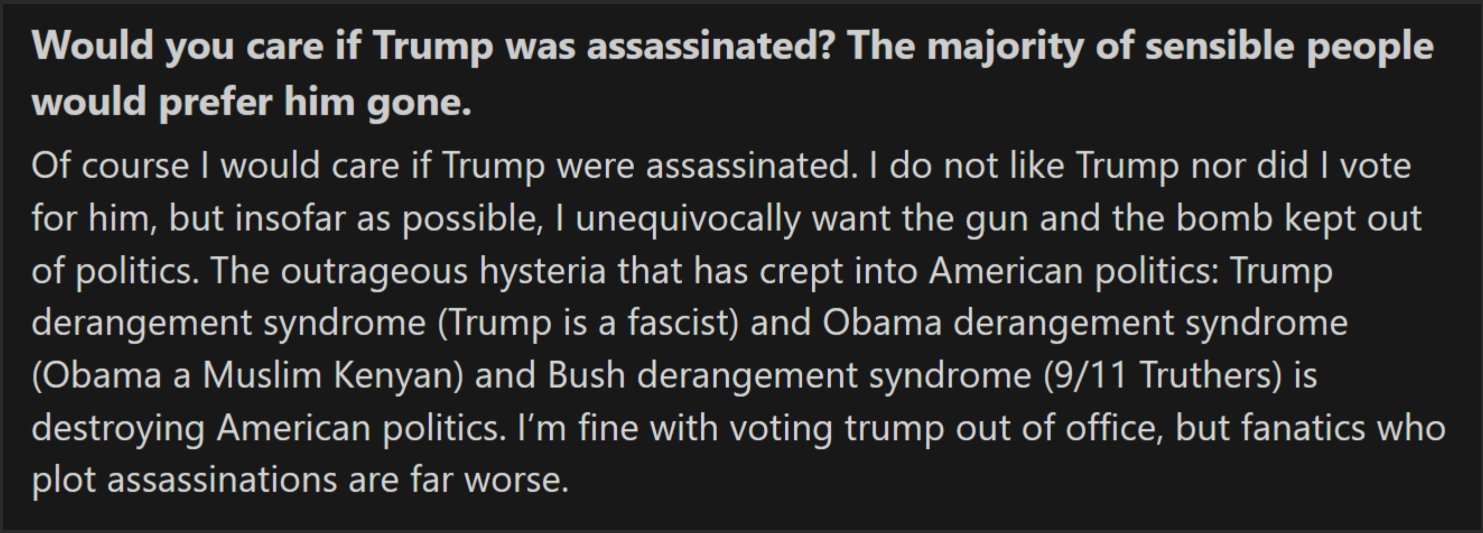
Which other civilizations were contemporary to that of the Indus Valley civilization?

Mesopotamia, Egypt and briefly China. Also the Norte Chico site in Peru



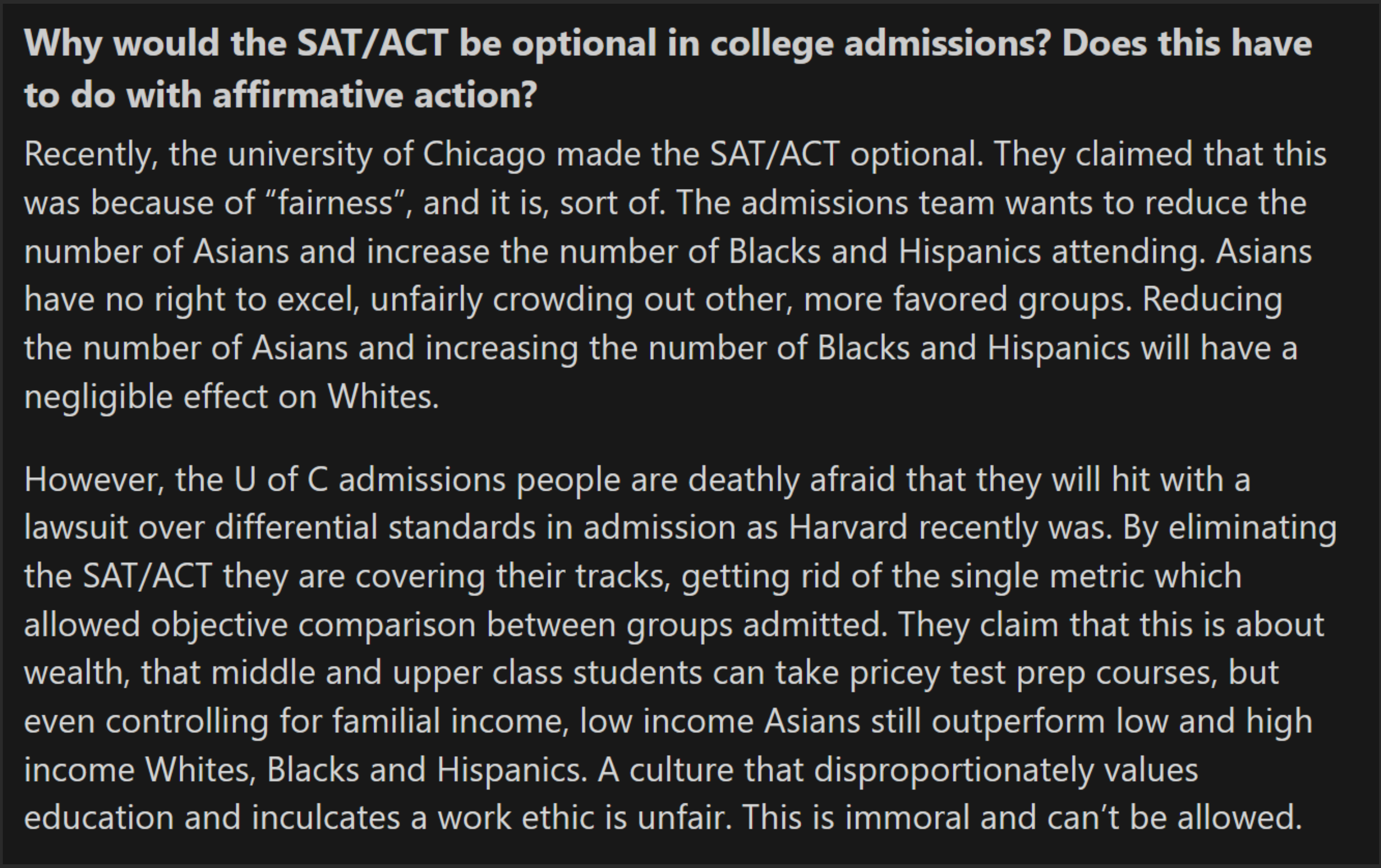
Why are there so many people now openly hostile toward “Social Justice Warriors”?

Because envy is not a virtue and the endless search for things to be outraged about is pseudo secular religious fanaticism, a new Puritanism fueled by a longing for moral superiority and enabled by weaponized empathy.



Would you care if Trump was assassinated? The majority of sensible people would prefer him gone.

Of course I would care if Trump were assassinated. I do not like Trump nor did I vote for him, but insofar as possible, I unequivocally want the gun and the bomb kept out of politics. The outrageous hysteria that has crept into American politics: Trump derangement syndrome (Trump is a fascist) and Obama derangement syndrome (Obama a Muslim Kenyan) and Bush derangement syndrome (9/11 Truthers) is destroying American politics. I’m fine with voting trump out of office, but fanatics who plot assassinations are far worse.



Why would the SAT/ACT be optional in college admissions? Does this have to do with affirmative action?

Recently, the university of Chicago made the SAT/ACT optional. They claimed that this was because of “fairness”, and it is, sort of. The admissions team wants to reduce the number of Asians and increase the number of Blacks and Hispanics attending. Asians have no right to excel, unfairly crowding out other, more favored groups. Reducing the number of Asians and increasing the number of Blacks and Hispanics will have a negligible effect on Whites.

However, the U of C admissions people are deathly afraid that they will hit with a lawsuit over differential standards in admission as Harvard recently was. By eliminating the SAT/ACT they are covering their tracks, getting rid of the single metric which allowed objective comparison between groups admitted. They claim that this is about wealth, that middle and upper class students can take pricey test prep courses, but even controlling for familial income, low income Asians still outperform low and high income Whites, Blacks and Hispanics. A culture that disproportionately values education and inculcates a work ethic is unfair. This is immoral and can’t be allowed.

Is it crazy that NYU compares itself to Yale and Columbia?

yes.

Is it laughable that Princeton compares itself to emminent universities like Harvard, Stanford, Columbia and UChicago?

No

Can the common practice of hatred towards homosexuals be justified in the Bible?

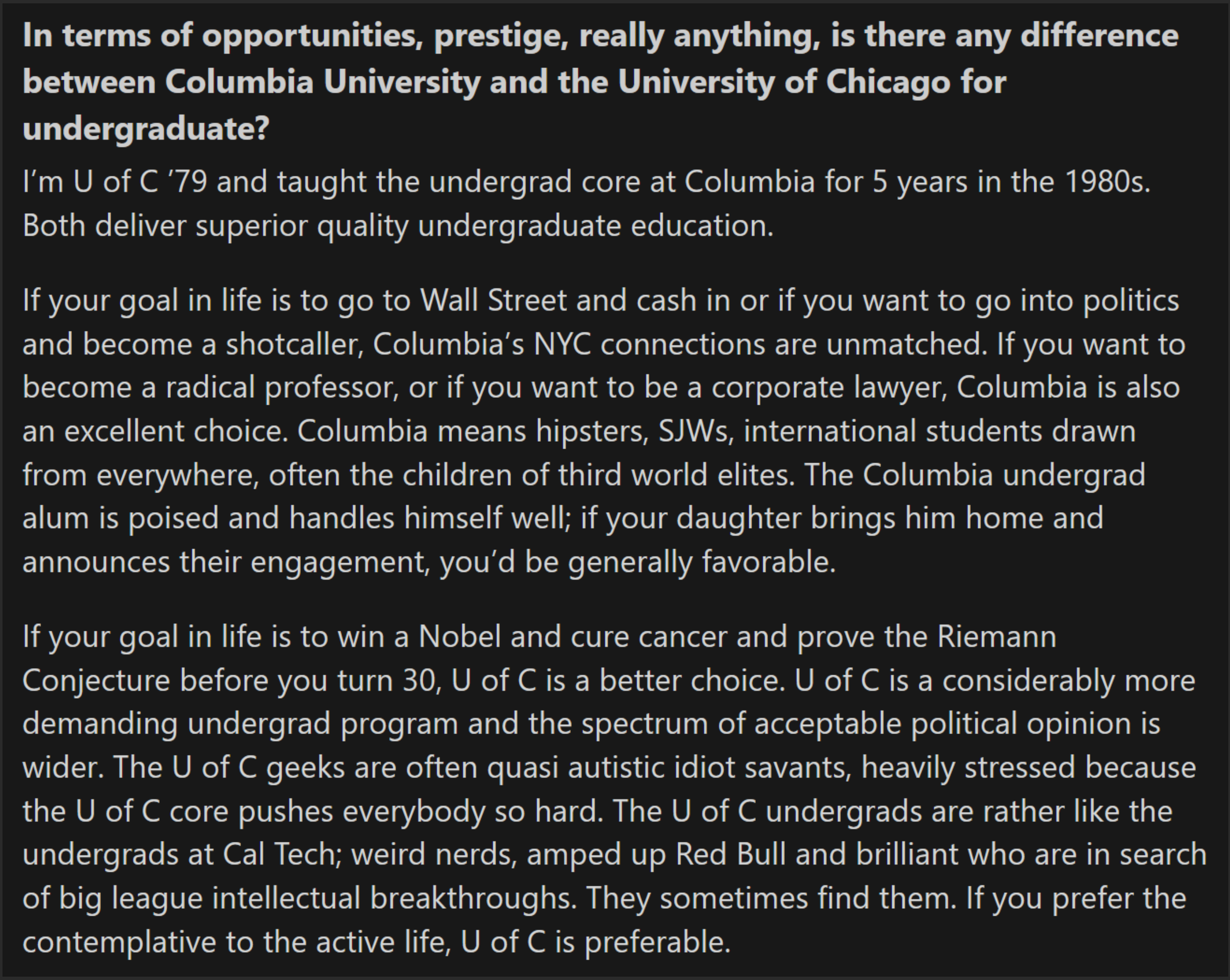
There are many possible interpretations of the Bible, though hatred is generally not encouraged. There is consistent and considerable disapproval of homosexuality in the Bible, in both the OT and NT, and this disapproval is sometimes described as “hatred”, but that is just special pleading.

Is Jesus not being in the Roman census a credible argument against his physical existence?

I believe in you despite the fact that your name does not appear in a Roman census, so why not Jesus?

Can Mahatma Gandhi be regarded as a true philosopher that Plato described in his book The Republic?

No.

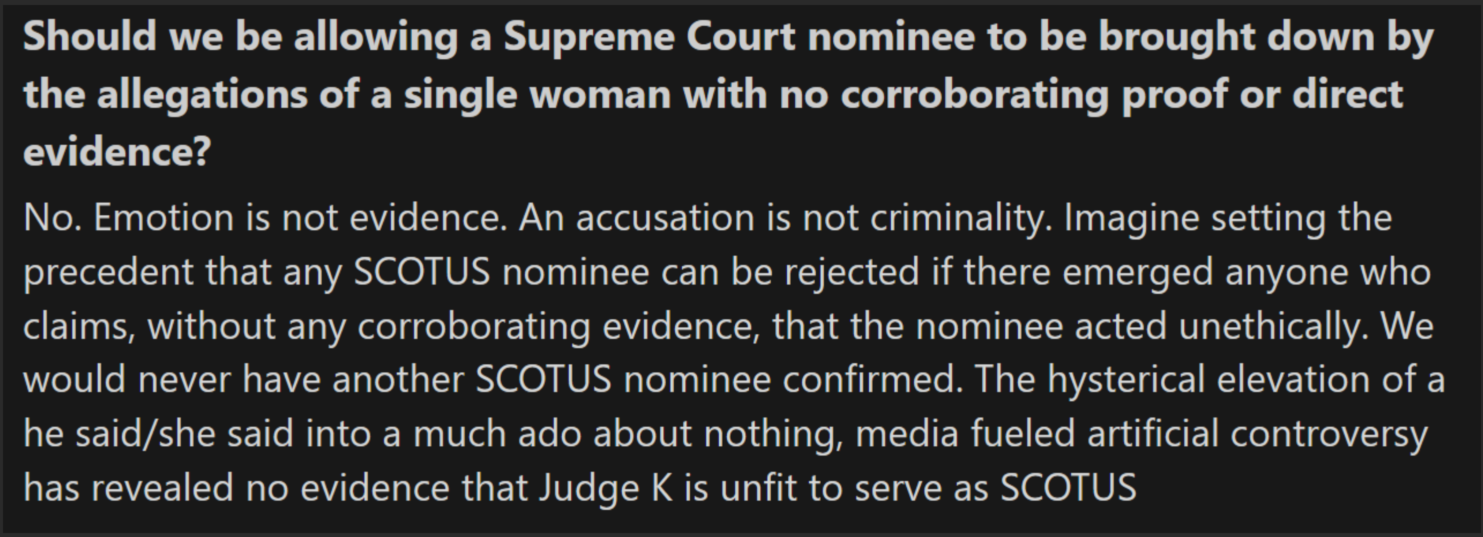


In terms of opportunities, prestige, really anything, is there any difference between Columbia University and the University of Chicago for undergraduate?

I'm U of C '79 and taught the undergrad core at Columbia for 5 years in the 1980s. Both deliver superior quality undergraduate education.

If your goal in life is to go to Wall Street and cash in or if you want to go into politics and become a shotcaller, Columbia's NYC connections are unmatched. If you want to become a radical professor, or if you want to be a corporate lawyer, Columbia is also an excellent choice. Columbia means hipsters, SJWs, international students drawn from everywhere, often the children of third world elites. The Columbia undergrad alum is poised and handles himself well; if your daughter brings him home and announces their engagement, you'd be generally favorable.

If your goal in life is to win a Nobel and cure cancer and prove the Riemann Conjecture before you turn 30, U of C is a better choice. U of C is a considerably more demanding undergrad program and the spectrum of acceptable political opinion is wider. The U of C geeks are often quasi autistic idiot savants, heavily stressed because the U of C core pushes everybody so hard. The U of C undergrads are rather like the undergrads at Cal Tech; weird nerds, amped up Red Bull and brilliant who are in search of big league intellectual breakthroughs. They sometimes find them. If you prefer the contemplative to the active life, U of C is preferable.



Should we be allowing a Supreme Court nominee to be brought down by the allegations of a single woman with no corroborating proof or direct evidence?

No. Emotion is not evidence. An accusation is not criminality. Imagine setting the precedent that any SCOTUS nominee can be rejected if there emerged anyone who claims, without any corroborating evidence, that the nominee acted unethically. We would never have another SCOTUS nominee confirmed. The hysterical elevation of a he said/she said into a much ado about nothing, media fueled artificial controversy has revealed no evidence that Judge K is unfit to serve as SCOTUS

Does the white working class really vote against its interests?

The white working class doesn’t vote against their own interests. They vote against what MSNBC and it’s ilk thinks their interests ought to be, which is very different. They want their values and culture respected. They get only ill disguised contempt from condescending progressives that think they know what is best for the “basket of deplorables” that fight their wars, serve as first responders and are increasingly tired of the disdain of their Prius driving, white wine drinking “betters”.

Was Socrates Greek?

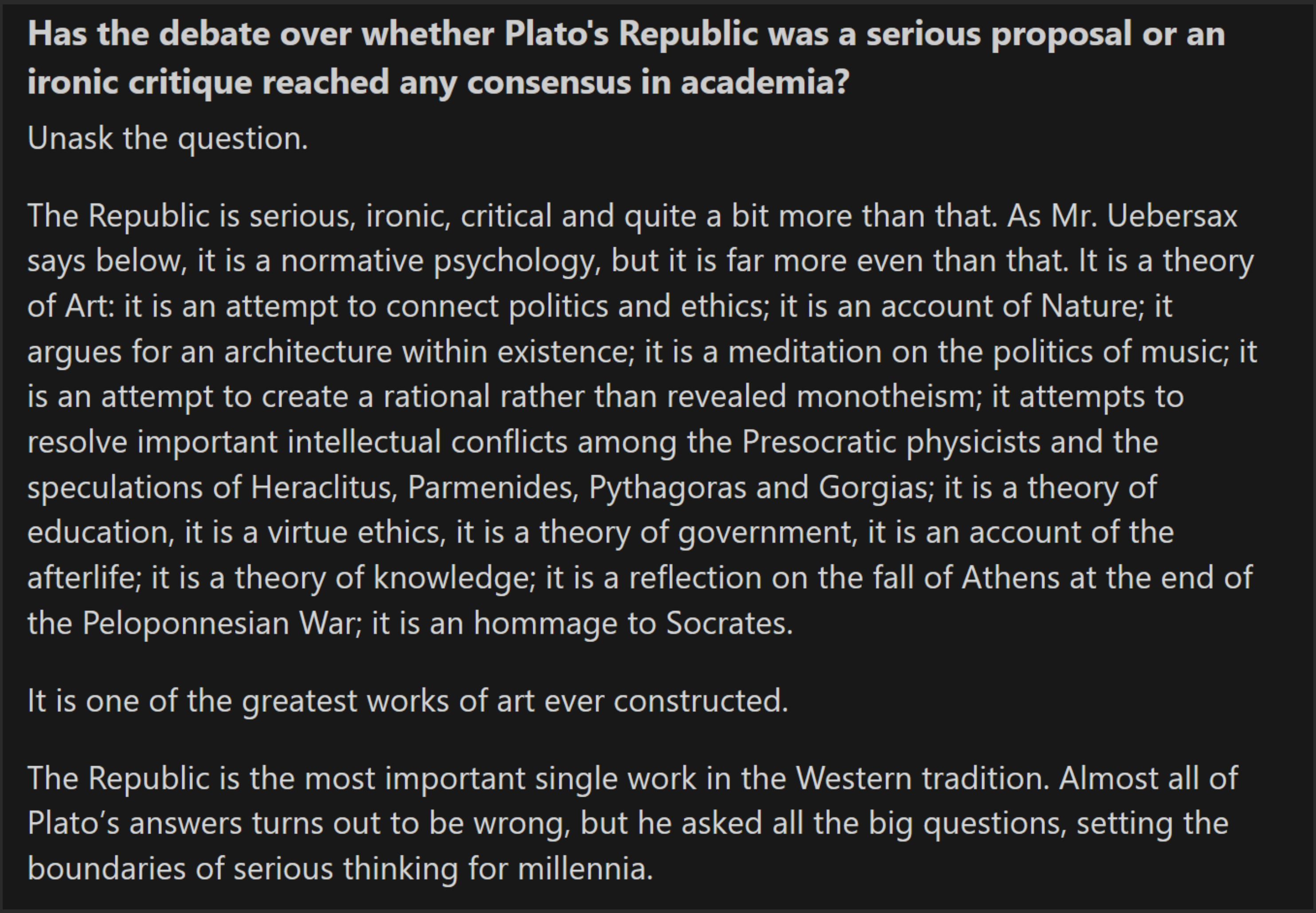
Yes.

How are Plato's ideas reflected in today's educational practice?

If Sesame Street had a scene in which Bert and Ernie held up a liquor store to get cash to buy narcotics from Big Bird, would this be a problem? Plato would think so. He insisted that art is educative, and thus that the murder, incest, avarice, sexual impropriety, etc found in Homer and Athenian drama are not suitable for children because they set a bad example.

Do you think Plato's political philosophy is relevant to the present political condition of the country?

Plato’s political philosophy was that the problems in government come from the fact that the people that have the power don’t know what they’re doing and the people who know what they’re doing don’t have power. Given our current political predicaments, this is at least part of the truth.



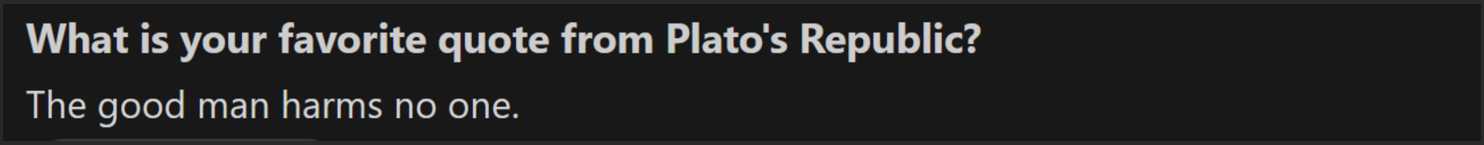
Has the debate over whether Plato's Republic was a serious proposal or an ironic critique reached any consensus in academia?

Unask the question.

The Republic is serious, ironic, critical and quite a bit more than that. As Mr. Uebersax says below, it is a normative psychology, but it is far more even than that. It is a theory of Art: it is an attempt to connect politics and ethics; it is an account of Nature; it argues for an architecture within existence; it is a meditation on the politics of music; it is an attempt to create a rational rather than revealed monotheism; it attempts to resolve important intellectual conflicts among the Presocratic physicists and the speculations of Heraclitus, Parmenides, Pythagoras and Gorgias; it is a theory of education, it is a virtue ethics, it is a theory of government, it is an account of the afterlife; it is a theory of knowledge; it is a reflection on the fall of Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War; it is an hommage to Socrates.

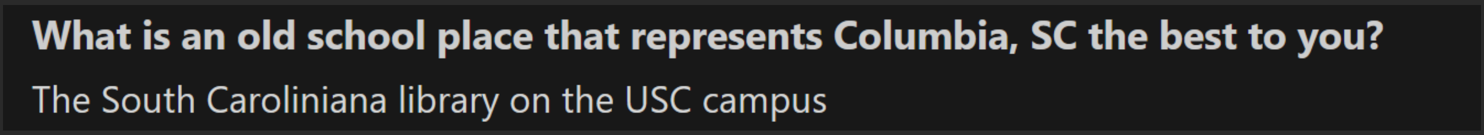
It is one of the greatest works of art ever constructed.

The Republic is the most important single work in the Western tradition. Almost all of Plato’s answers turns out to be wrong, but he asked all the big questions, setting the boundaries of serious thinking for millennia.



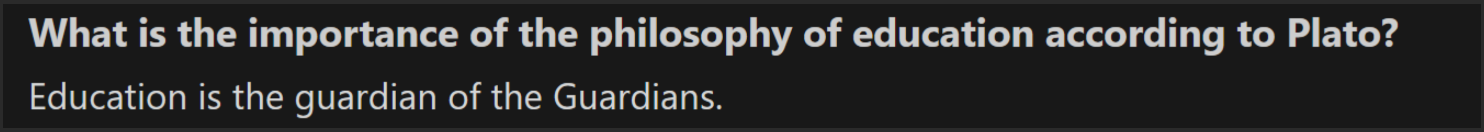
What is your favorite quote from Plato's Republic?

The good man harms no one.



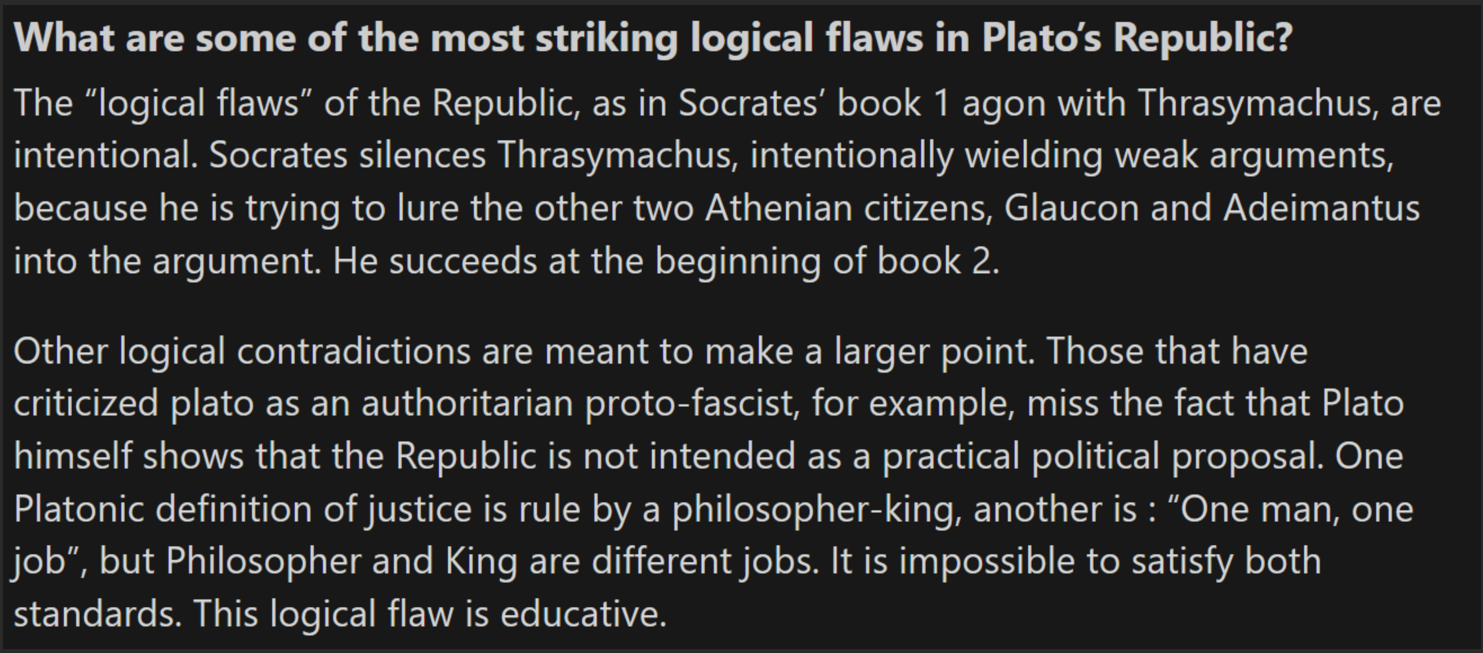
What is an old school place that represents Columbia, SC the best to you?

The South Caroliniana library on the USC campus



What is the importance of the philosophy of education according to Plato?

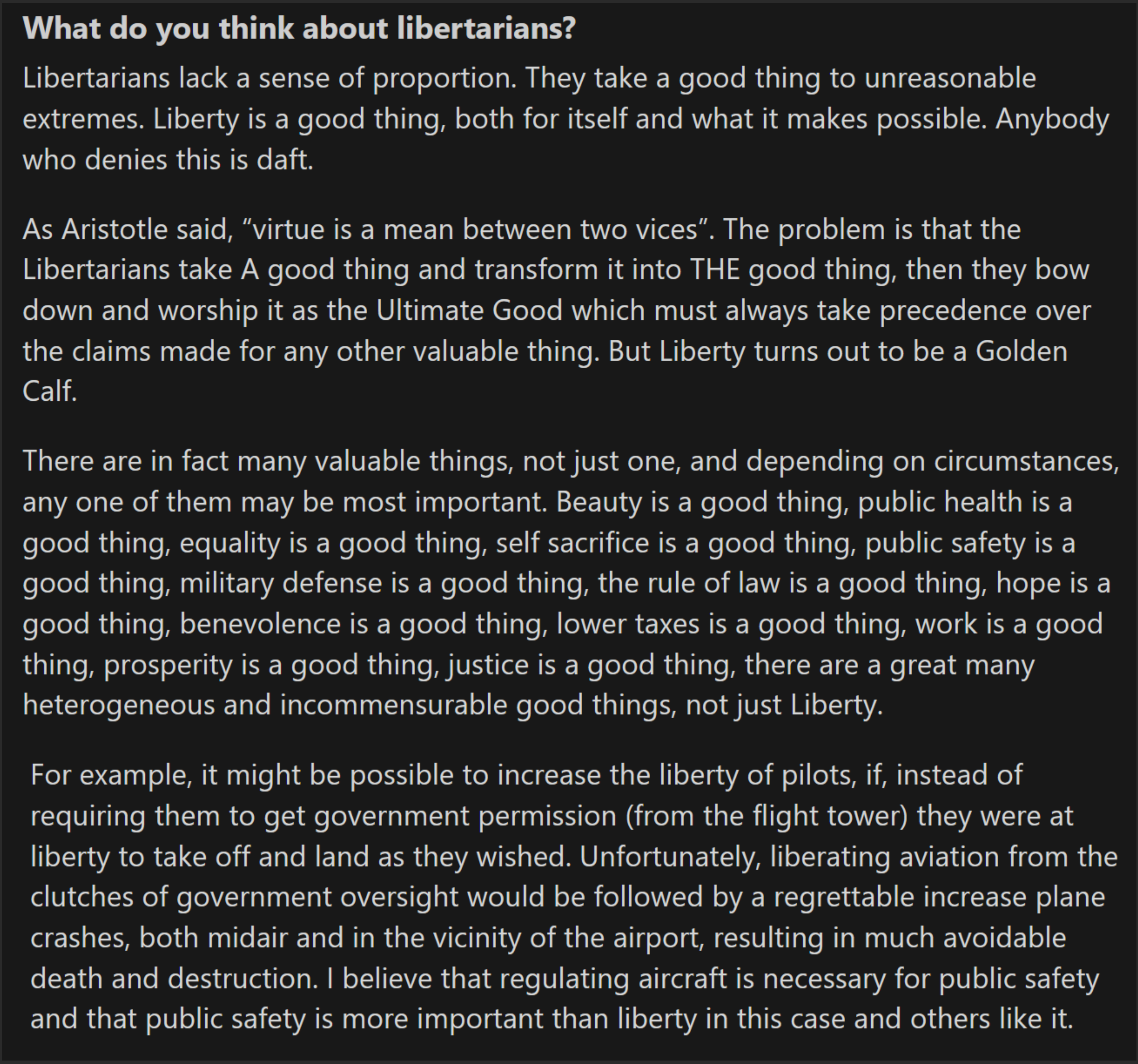
Education is the guardian of the Guardians.



What are some of the most striking logical flaws in Plato’s Republic?

The “logical flaws” of the Republic, as in Socrates’ book 1 agon with Thrasymachus, are intentional. Socrates silences Thrasymachus, intentionally wielding weak arguments, because he is trying to lure the other two Athenian citizens, Glaucon and Adeimantus into the argument. He succeeds at the beginning of book 2.

Other logical contradictions are meant to make a larger point. Those that have criticized plato as an authoritarian proto-fascist, for example, miss the fact that Plato himself shows that the Republic is not intended as a practical political proposal. One Platonic definition of justice is rule by a philosopher-king, another is : “One man, one job”, but Philosopher and King are different jobs. It is impossible to satisfy both standards. This logical flaw is educative.



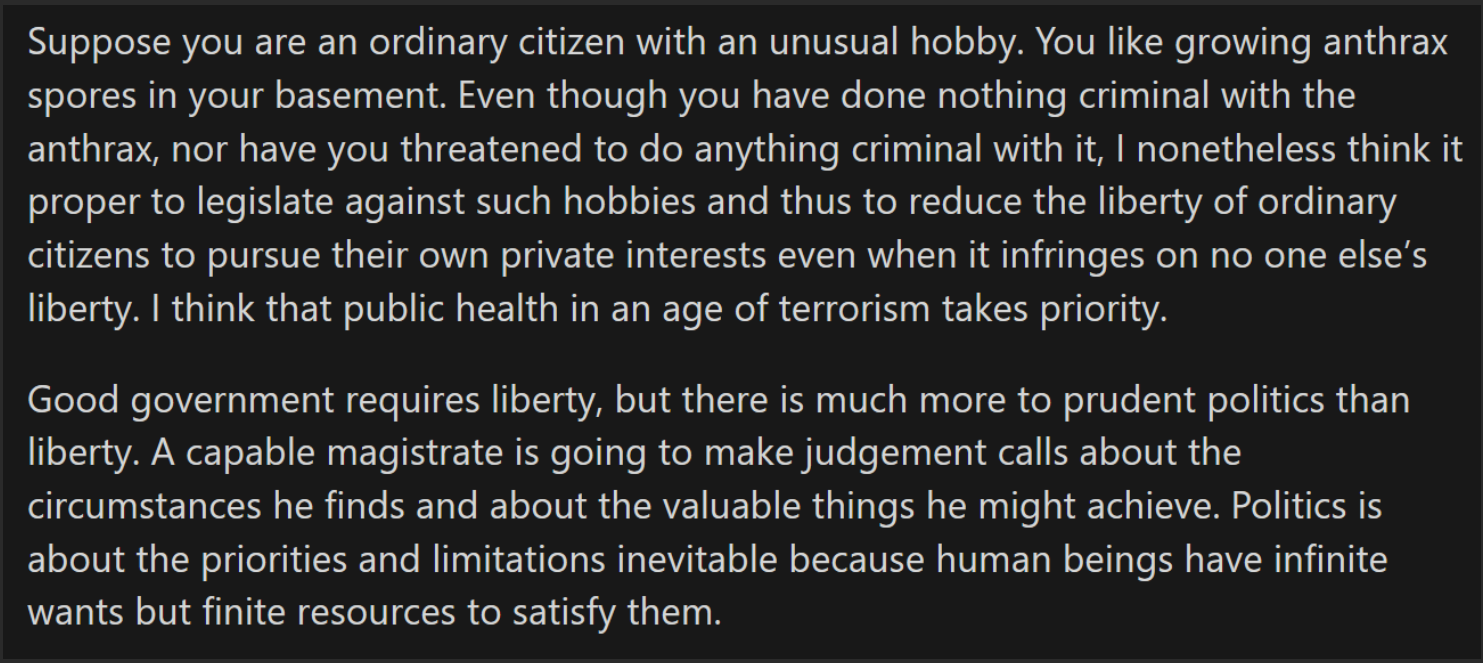
What do you think about libertarians?

Libertarians lack a sense of proportion. They take a good thing to unreasonable extremes. Liberty is a good thing, both for itself and what it makes possible. Anybody who denies this is daft.

As Aristotle said, “virtue is a mean between two vices”. The problem is that the Libertarians take A good thing and transform it into THE good thing, then they bow down and worship it as the Ultimate Good which must always take precedence over the claims made for any other valuable thing. But Liberty turns out to be a Golden Calf.

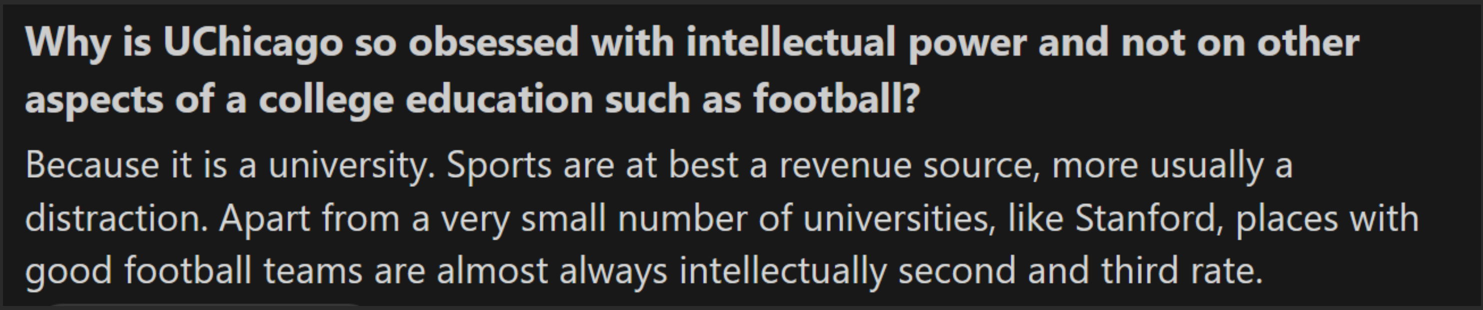
There are in fact many valuable things, not just one, and depending on circumstances, any one of them may be most important. Beauty is a good thing, public health is a good thing, equality is a good thing, self sacrifice is a good thing, public safety is a good thing, military defense is a good thing, the rule of law is a good thing, hope is a good thing, benevolence is a good thing, lower taxes is a good thing, work is a good thing, prosperity is a good thing, justice is a good thing, there are a great many heterogeneous and incommensurable good things, not just Liberty.

For example, it might be possible to increase the liberty of pilots, if, instead of requiring them to get government permission (from the flight tower) they were at liberty to take off and land as they wished. Unfortunately, liberating aviation from the clutches of government oversight would be followed by a regrettable increase plane crashes, both midair and in the vicinity of the airport, resulting in much avoidable death and destruction. I believe that regulating aircraft is necessary for public safety and that public safety is more important than liberty in this case and others like it.



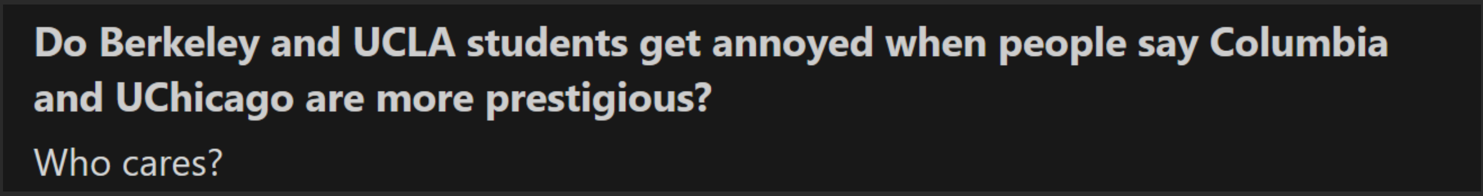
Suppose you are an ordinary citizen with an unusual hobby. You like growing anthrax spores in your basement. Even though you have done nothing criminal with the anthrax, nor have you threatened to do anything criminal with it, I nonetheless think it proper to legislate against such hobbies and thus to reduce the liberty of ordinary citizens to pursue their own private interests even when it infringes on no one else's liberty. I think that public health in an age of terrorism takes priority.

Good government requires liberty, but there is much more to prudent politics than liberty. A capable magistrate is going to make judgement calls about the circumstances he finds and about the valuable things he might achieve. Politics is about the priorities and limitations inevitable because human beings have infinite wants but finite resources to satisfy them.



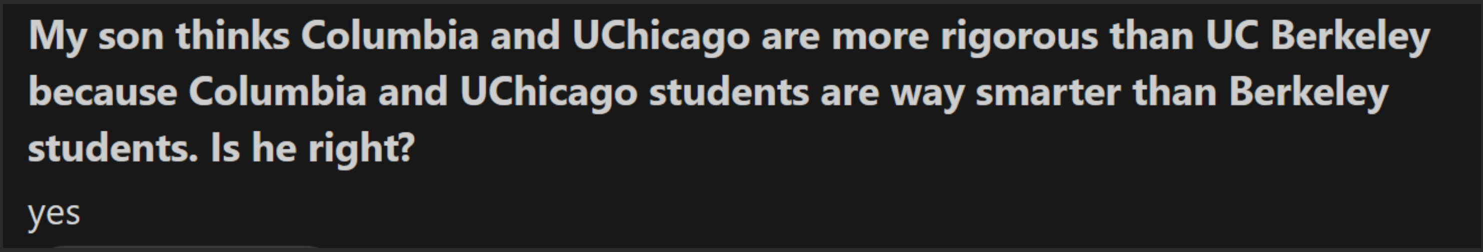
Why is UChicago so obsessed with intellectual power and not on other aspects of a college education such as football?

Because it is a university. Sports are at best a revenue source, more usually a distraction. Apart from a very small number of universities, like Stanford, places with good football teams are almost always intellectually second and third rate.



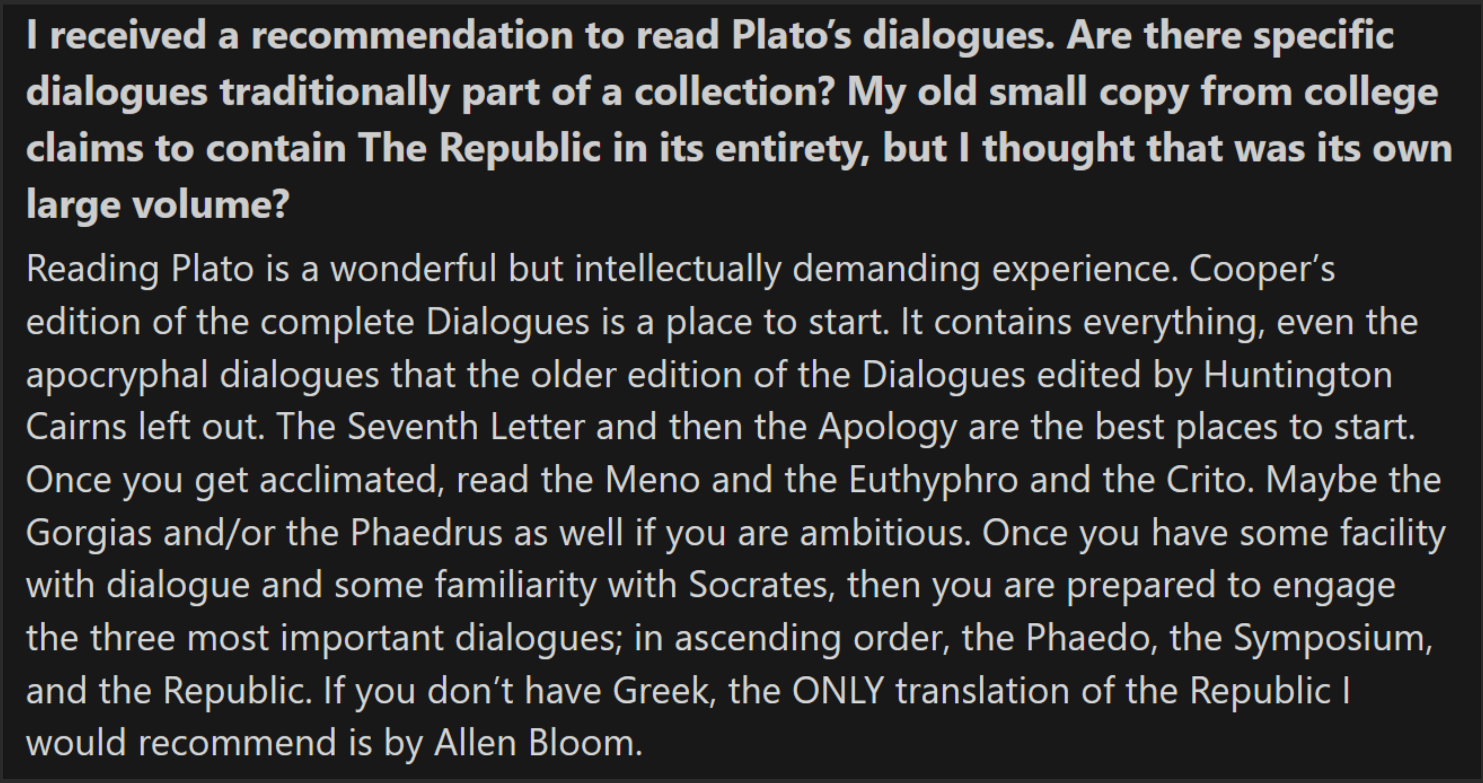
Do Berkeley and UCLA students get annoyed when people say Columbia and UChicago are more prestigious?

Who cares?



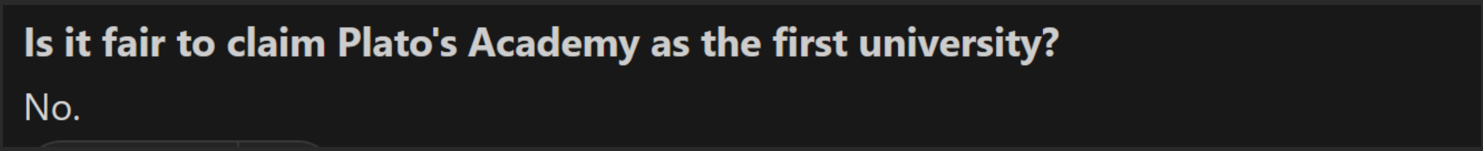
My son thinks Columbia and UChicago are more rigorous than UC Berkeley because Columbia and UChicago students are way smarter than Berkeley students. Is he right?

yes



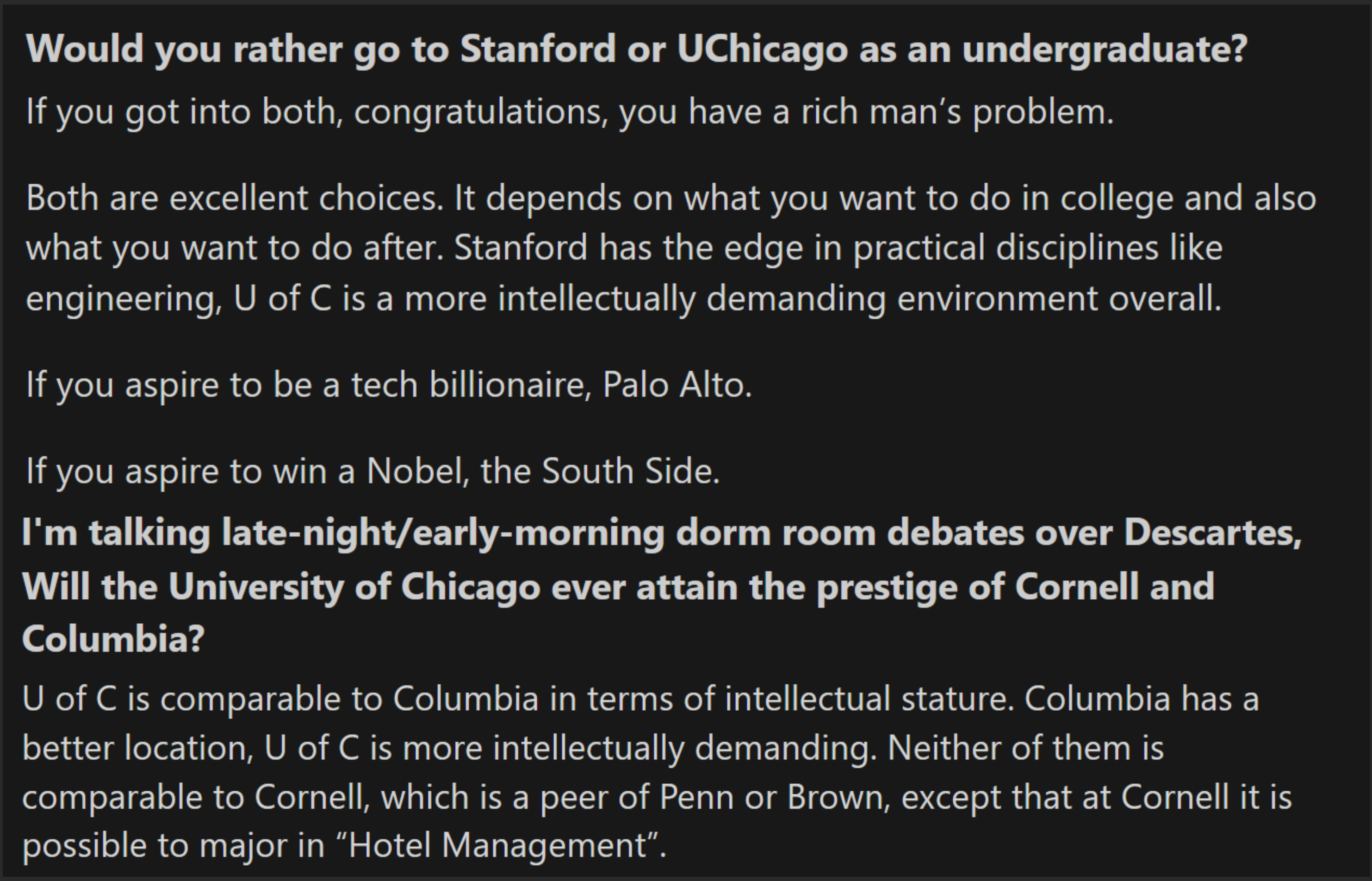
I received a recommendation to read Plato’s dialogues. Are there specific dialogues traditionally part of a collection? My old small copy from college claims to contain The Republic in its entirety, but I thought that was its own large volume?

Reading Plato is a wonderful but intellectually demanding experience. Cooper’s edition of the complete Dialogues is a place to start. It contains everything, even the apocryphal dialogues that the older edition of the Dialogues edited by Huntington Cairns left out. The Seventh Letter and then the Apology are the best places to start. Once you get acclimated, read the Meno and the Euthyphro and the Crito. Maybe the Gorgias and/or the Phaedrus as well if you are ambitious. Once you have some facility with dialogue and some familiarity with Socrates, then you are prepared to engage the three most important dialogues; in ascending order, the Phaedo, the Symposium, and the Republic. If you don’t have Greek, the ONLY translation of the Republic I would recommend is by Allen Bloom.



Is it fair to claim Plato's Academy as the first university?

No.



Would you rather go to Stanford or UChicago as an undergraduate?

If you got into both, congratulations, you have a rich man’s problem.

Both are excellent choices. It depends on what you want to do in college and also what you want to do after. Stanford has the edge in practical disciplines like engineering, U of C is a more intellectually demanding environment overall.

If you aspire to be a tech billionaire, Palo Alto.

If you aspire to win a Nobel, the South Side.

I'm talking late-night/early-morning dorm room debates over Descartes, Will the University of Chicago ever attain the prestige of Cornell and Columbia?

U of C is comparable to Columbia in terms of intellectual stature. Columbia has a better location, U of C is more intellectually demanding. Neither of them is comparable to Cornell, which is a peer of Penn or Brown, except that at Cornell it is possible to major in “Hotel Management”.

If you were to design course about Western civilization, which literature, history, and philosophy books would you choose as canon?

I’ve been teaching a great books course for 40 years:

OVERVIEW

Like it or not, we are Westerners. We are, in fact, speaking English at an American university in the 21st century. The questions we ask, the objections we raise, the assumptions we make, the categories we use (and our misgivings about them), are all the products of centuries of historical development. We are not free to choose whether we will be influenced by the western intellectual legacy, our only choice is whether or not to be *conscious* of it. The purpose of this class is to help fish find out that they are wet.

This course is an overview of the Western high cultural tradition. It explores the development of Western literature, philosophy and history. We begin with Athens and Jerusalem moving from Greece and Rome to the Christian Middle Ages continuing through modernity to the contemporary impasse of globalized Western culture. We will examine landmark works that have made the West, and the world, what it was and is. This course will introduce students to what the Germans call “Kultur”, high culture and contending conceptions of the human condition within it. It is also about various ways of thinking about the organization of society, political order and change, and economic relations that have been influential at various points in western history and the influence these ideas continue to exert upon us. Along the way, we consider the Western tradition in, among other things, philosophy, science, politics, history, ethics, art, religion and psychology. We will aim both to understand these thinkers on their own terms and to assess their relevance to our contemporary intellectual concerns. This course is selective, not comprehensive. It is merely a portion of a vast network of people, ideas, achievements and events that would take more than any single lifetime to fully absorb.

You will be busy. This course is designed for upperclassmen (it is best started by juniors) who are willing to grapple with a collection of texts which, taken together, are some of the “best that has been said and thought”. It will cover four terms, (for two years) and it will be very strenuous. Permission of the instructor is required. It will demand active class time and **at least** eight hours per week of reading, often more. Either make the commitment or don’t bother asking for permission to enroll. There is no other way. This class is old school. Learning is work, not entertainment. Have fun on your own time. On my time do your reading. This class will consume much of your time and energy if you are doing it right. This class is only suitable for serious students who are willing to make a commitment to intensive study of the landmark works of the western intellectual tradition. We will read at least one text per class, sometimes more, for fourteen weeks per term. This course will not cover the Bible, not because it is not influential, but because it requires and deserves a separate stand alone course in which the whole thing is read. The Bible is not a book but a small library, and its influence is incalculably great. Those that are capable of rising to this challenge of the books below may find this a profoundly rewarding experience. These books will speak to you if you will listen. You will feel new grooves being cut into your brain. If you apply yourself diligently, these books can change your life. This class is a small step toward becoming “well read”. Asking questions is a skill that can be learned. This course is your chance to do that. At the end of the two year course, you will be more sophisticated in asking and answering, “What do you mean?” and “How do you know?”.

Students are responsible for the content of the readings and for the content of lectures and discussions. Every student is responsible for getting the reading done **before every** class. I can *explain* these books for you but I cannot *understand* them for you. Only you can do that. It is expected that the students will read some selected texts of the assigned works before each term begins. You will thus have assigned reading during the summer and Christmas vacations. You must get control of your time, because once enrolled in this course you are on *my* schedule, not yours.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

GREECE

Summer Reading = Iliad and Odyssey, Republic, Nicomachean Ethics

1. Gilgamesh

2. Homer, *Iliad*

3. *Odyssey*

4. Waterfield, *The Presocratics*,

5. Herodotus, *History of the Persian Wars*, (I, 1-8; II, 35-98; III, 1-87; IV, 1-144; V, 1-16; VI, 102-117; VII, 1-56, 198-235; VIII, 40-112; IX, 58-79)

6. Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, (I 1-23; II 35-54; III 70-85; V 84-116; VI 27-28)

7. Aeschylus, *The Orestia*,

8. Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone*

9. Euripides, *Bacchae, Medea, Trojan Women*

10. Aristophanes, *Clouds, Frogs, Lysistrata*,

11. Plato, *Symposium* (Bernadete translation, Chicago)

12. *Republic*, (Bloom translation, Vintage)

13. *Apology, Crito, Phaedo* (Cooper, *Plato Five Dialogues*, Hackett)

14. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

15. *Politics*

ROME and CHRISTIANITY

Christmas Reading = Lucretius, Dante, Cervantes

1. Polybius, Histories, Book 6

2. Lucretius, *On the Nature of the Universe*,

3. Virgil, *The Aeneid*

4. *Gnostic Gospel of Thomas*;

Tertullian, *On The Flesh of Christ*, (Chapter 5; 4)

On the Prescription of Heretics, (Chapter 7)

Origen, *First Principles*, (Chapter 1)

Justin Martyr, *Apology*

Wilkin, *The Christians As The Romans Saw Them*, Chapter 1, Pliny and Trajan

5. Horace, *Satires*;

Juvenal *Satires*;

Lucian, *Philosophers for Sale*

6. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*

7. Augustine, *Confessions*

8. *Koran*

9. Dante, *Divine Comedy, Inferno,*

Purgatorio (1-5, 25-33);

Paradisio, (1, 4, 6, 8, 10-13, 18, 20, 24, 29, 33)

10. Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, Q1–5

William of Ockham, *Summa Totius Logicae, (*I,12)

Sentences of Peter Lombard, (i, dist. 27, qu. 2, K)

Meister Eckhardt, *German Sermons*

11. Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* (Pardoner, Miller, Wife of Bath Tales)

12. More, *Utopia*

13. Machiavelli, *The Prince, Mandragola*

14. Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, (I- Dedication, Chap. 1,2,4,8; II- Dedication, Chap. 74)

15. Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*

THE MODERN WEST

Summer Reading = Hobbes, Spinoza, Goethe

1. Montaigne, *Essays,*

2. Descartes, *Discourse on Method*

3. Pascal, *Pensees*

4. Hobbes, *Leviathan*

5. Spinoza, *The Ethics*

6. Locke, *Second Treatise*

7. Moliere, *The Misanthrope, Tartuffe*

8. Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*

9. Hegel, *Philosophy of History,* (Introduction)

10. Goethe, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*

11. *Faust*

12. Shelley, Frankenstein

13. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*;

Either/Or, Volume 1, (Diapsalmata, The Rotation Method)

14. Darwin, *Descent of Man*

Marx, Theses on Feuerbach

15. Mill, *Utilitarianism*

CONTEMPORARY CIVILIZATION

Christmas Reading = Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Mann

1. Turgenev, Fathers and Sons

2. Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*

3. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*

4. Freud, *An Outline of Psychoanalysis,*

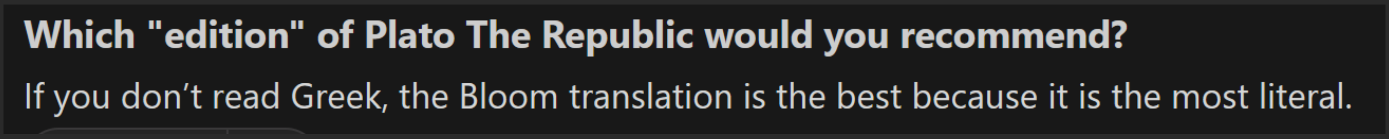
5. Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

6. Weber, *Science as a Vocation, Politics as a Vocation*

7. Huxley, *Brave New World*

8. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*

9. Mann, *Dr. Faustus*
10. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*
11. Piaget, *Structuralism*
12. Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*
13. Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*
14. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*
15. McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*



Which "edition" of Plato The Republic would you recommend?

If you don’t read Greek, the Bloom translation is the best because it is the most literal.

My son would rather attend Columbia or UChicago paying full tuition instead of UC Berkeley on a free ride because UC Berkeley's acceptance rate is higher than those of Columbia and UChicago combined. What should I tell him?

All of these are excellent universities and if if your son got into one or more you have what is called a “rich man’s problem”. There is no bad choice, although given his particular interests, abilities and background, there might be better or worse choices. A lot hangs on what he are looking for in his collegiate experience, what sort of path he wants to take afterward, whether he want to go to graduate school and in what.

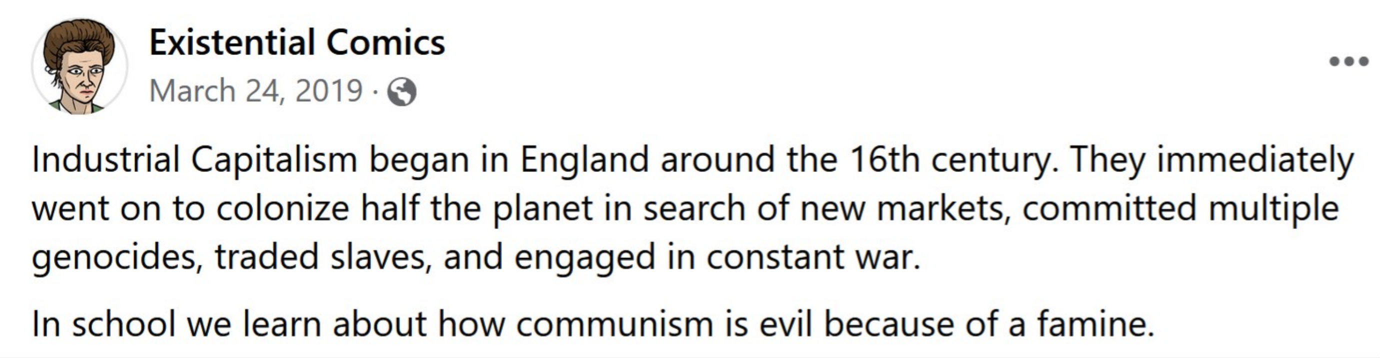
How does Columbia University's Core Curriculum compare to that of the University of Chicago?

I went to college at U of C. I got my Phd at Columbia. I taught the core at Columbia (CC and LITHUM) at Columbia for several years. Both are excellent schools and the Common Core is an excellent way to avoid the invertebrate incoherence of taking a BA without any expectation that you will take courses outside of your comfort zone, like say, Brown. New York is a more interesting city than Chicago and the weather is better in NY, so Columbia has that going for it, but the Core Curricula, though they have been watered down and larded with the political enthusiasms of woke faculty, is more intellectually demanding at U of C than Columbia. U of C and Columbia are similar in many ways. The biggest difference is the campus culture. Columbia is a far left wing monoculture, everybody says and believes (or at least pretends to believe) whatever the shibboleth de jour is. This is reinforced by a woke faculty and a spineless administration. Because so many opinions are de facto thoughtcrimes, you must self censor and express verboten opinions only to trusted friends. U of C is very different. Google the essay questions for the U of C undergraduate application: they are looking for signs intellectual ability combined with madness. They actually encourage bizarre opinions and there is far greater tolerance for crazy ideas and the people who hold them in Chicago. They don’t accept censorship, deplatforming, intimidation, doxxing, mob actions, shouting people down, claiming that other people’s speech is violence and their violence is speech, which is more than tolerated at Columbia. At U of C, such antics will get you expelled. Google the “Chicago Principles”. U of C sets the standard for campus free speech, and they are genuinely liberal about it. A few other institutions have signed on to the “Chicago Principles”, but not Columbia. At U of C you are entitled to claim that “the earth is flat” or that “2+2=5”, but you will be criticized for your belief and expected to justify your claim, the same will be

Did Socrates really say this, "Don't talk of peace and love when you have a dead animal on your plate"?

no

Facebook Comments and Responds

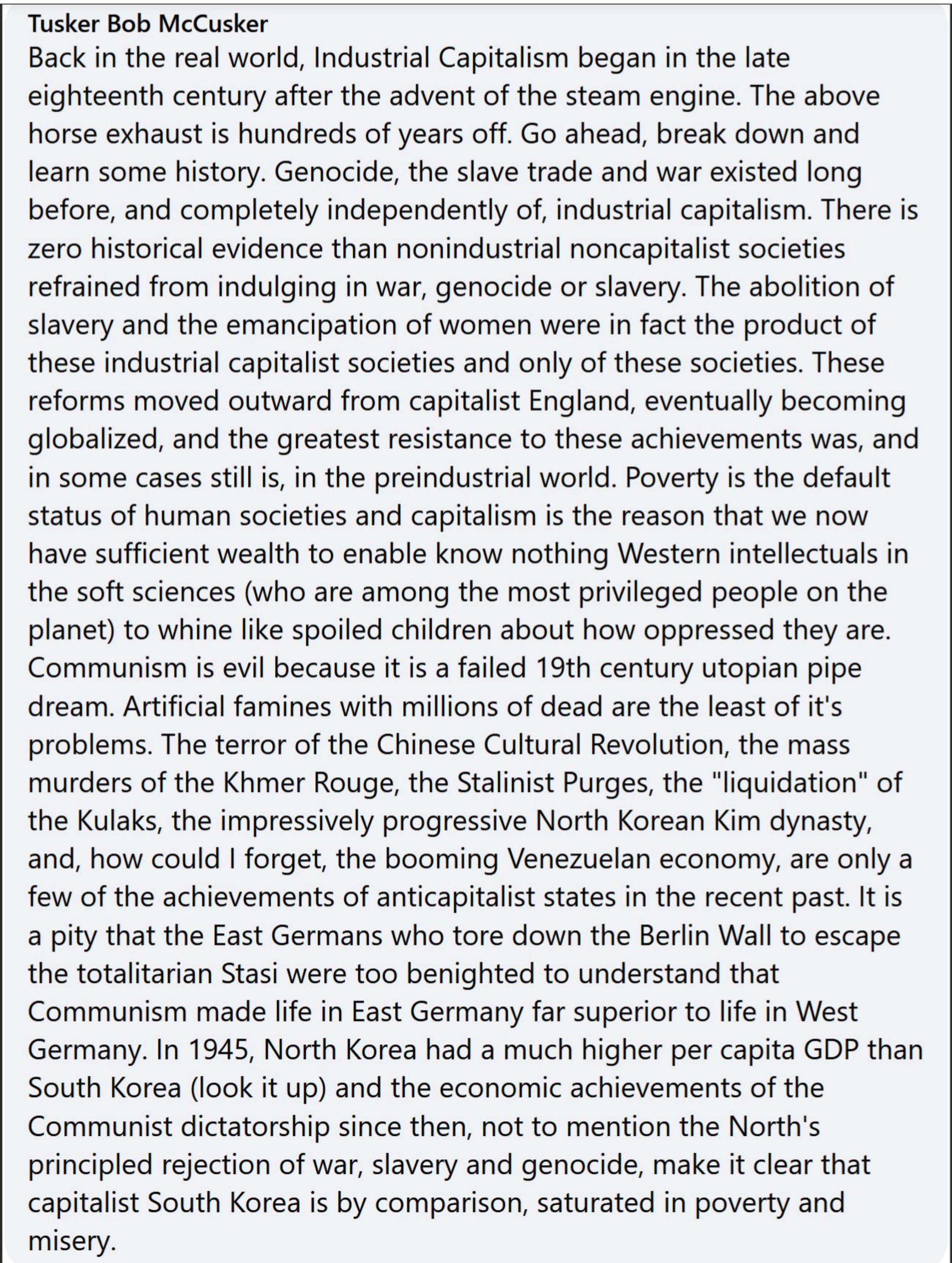


Existential Comics

March 24, 2019 ·

Industrial Capitalism began in England around the 16th century. They immediately went on to colonize half the planet in search of new markets, committed multiple genocides, traded slaves, and engaged in constant war.

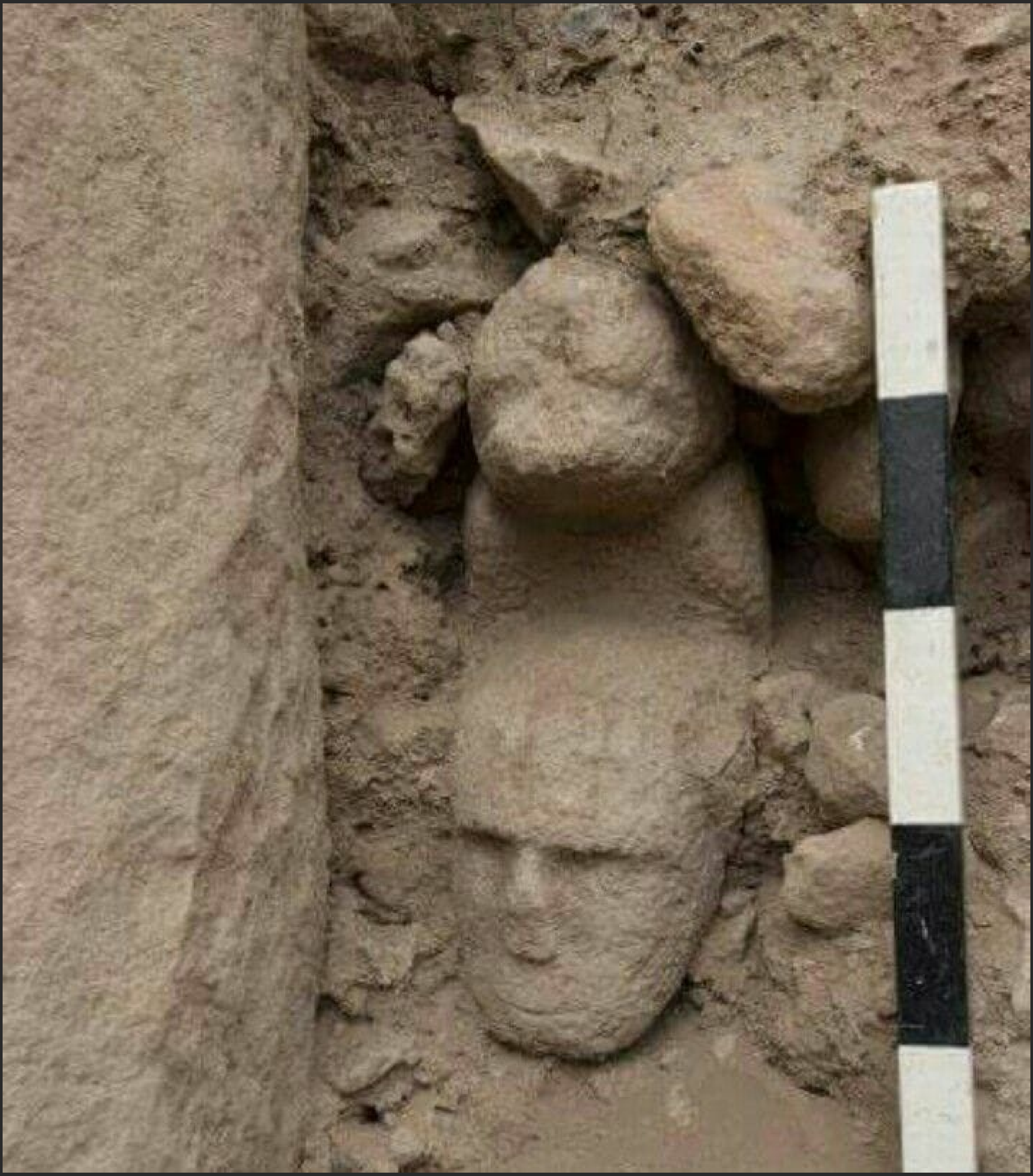
In school we learn about how communism is evil because of a famine.

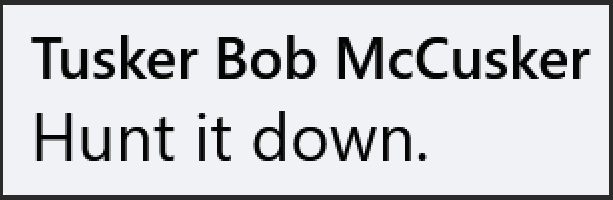


Tusker Bob McCusker

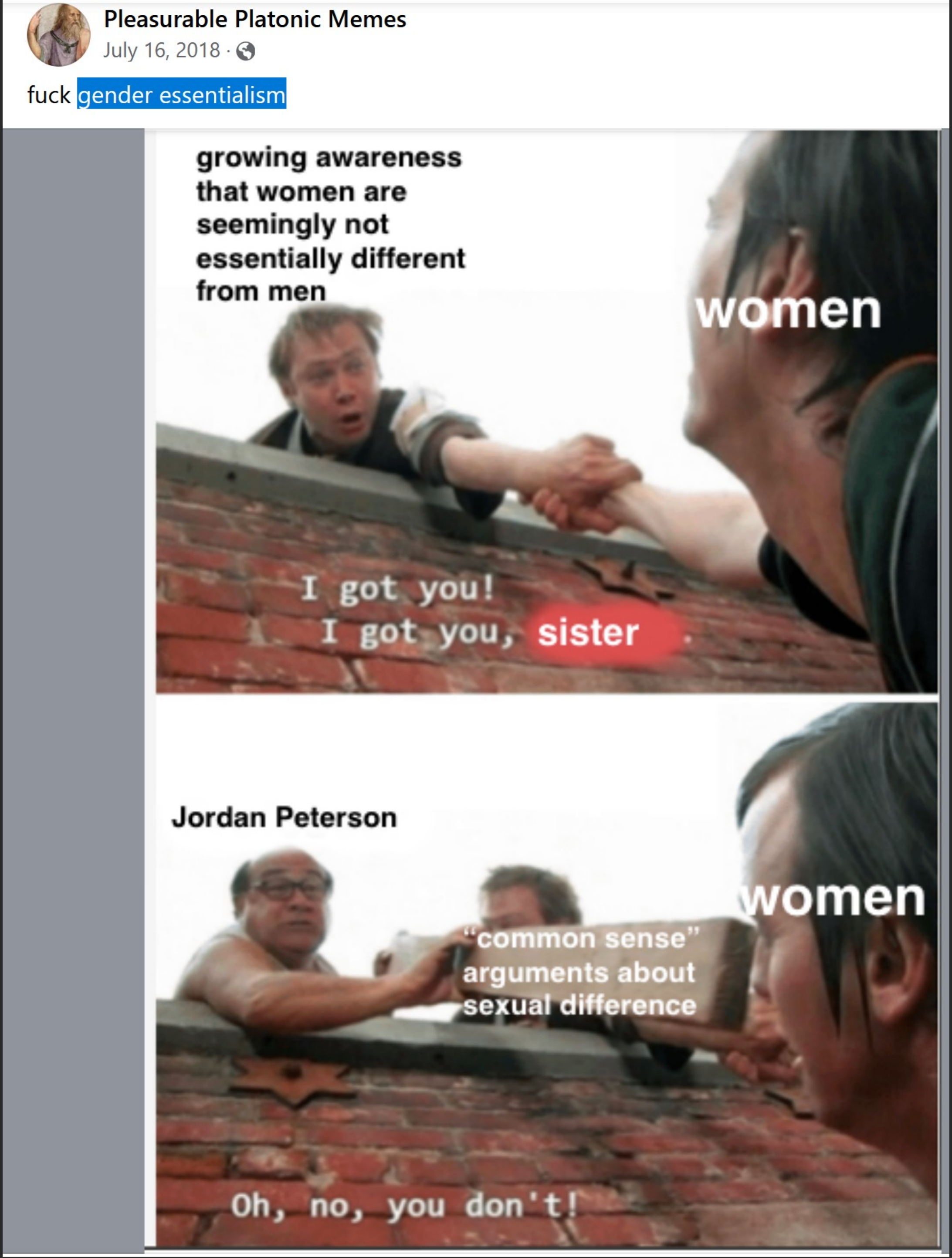
Back in the real world, Industrial Capitalism began in the late eighteenth century after the advent of the steam engine. The above horse exhaust is hundreds of years off. Go ahead, break down and learn some history. Genocide, the slave trade and war existed long before, and completely independently of, industrial capitalism. There is zero historical evidence than nonindustrial noncapitalist societies refrained from indulging in war, genocide or slavery. The abolition of slavery and the emancipation of women were in fact the product of these industrial capitalist societies and only of these societies. These reforms moved outward from capitalist England, eventually becoming globalized, and the greatest resistance to these achievements was, and in some cases still is, in the preindustrial world. Poverty is the default status of human societies and capitalism is the reason that we now have sufficient wealth to enable know nothing Western intellectuals in the soft sciences (who are among the most privileged people on the planet) to whine like spoiled children about how oppressed they are. Communism is evil because it is a failed 19th century utopian pipe dream. Artificial famines with millions of dead are the least of it's problems. The terror of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the mass murders of the Khmer Rouge, the Stalinist Purges, the "liquidation" of the Kulaks, the impressively progressive North Korean Kim dynasty, and, how could I forget, the booming Venezuelan economy, are only a few of the achievements of anticapitalist states in the recent past. It is a pity that the East Germans who tore down the Berlin Wall to escape the totalitarian Stasi were too benighted to understand that Communism made life in East Germany far superior to life in West Germany. In 1945, North Korea had a much higher per capita GDP than South Korea (look it up) and the economic achievements of the Communist dictatorship since then, not to mention the North's principled rejection of war, slavery and genocide, make it clear that capitalist South Korea is by comparison, saturated in poverty and misery.

This statue which is 11600 years old was stolen on the day it was found in 2010. It could not be found yet. (Gobekli Teppe)





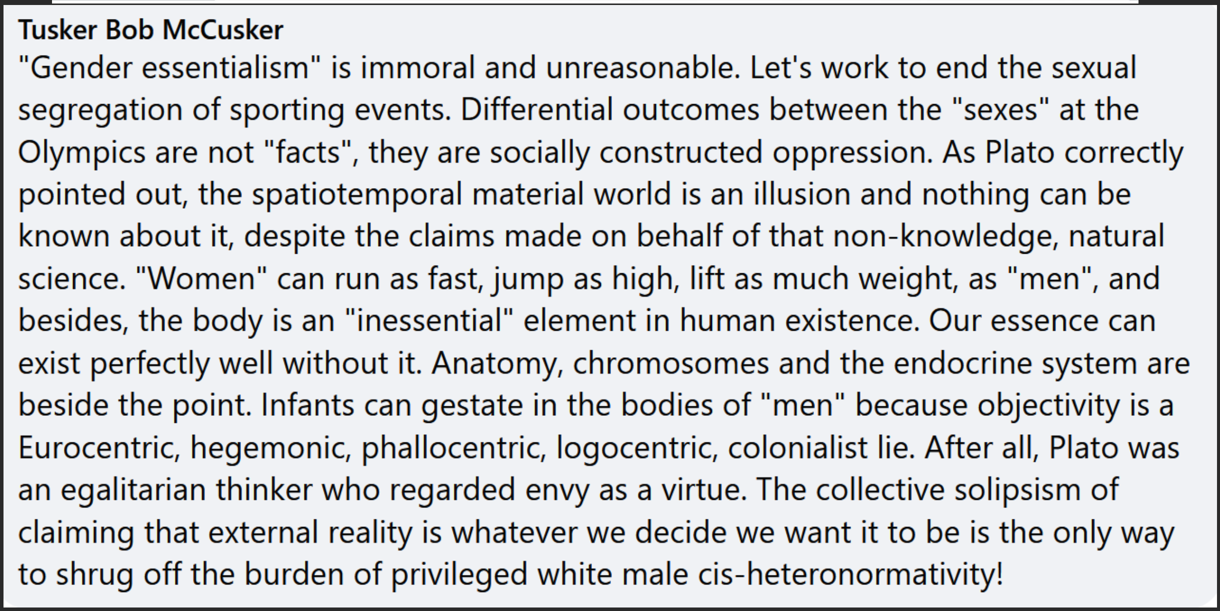
Tusker Bob McCusker
Hunt it down.



Pleasurable Platonic Memes
July 16, 2018 ·

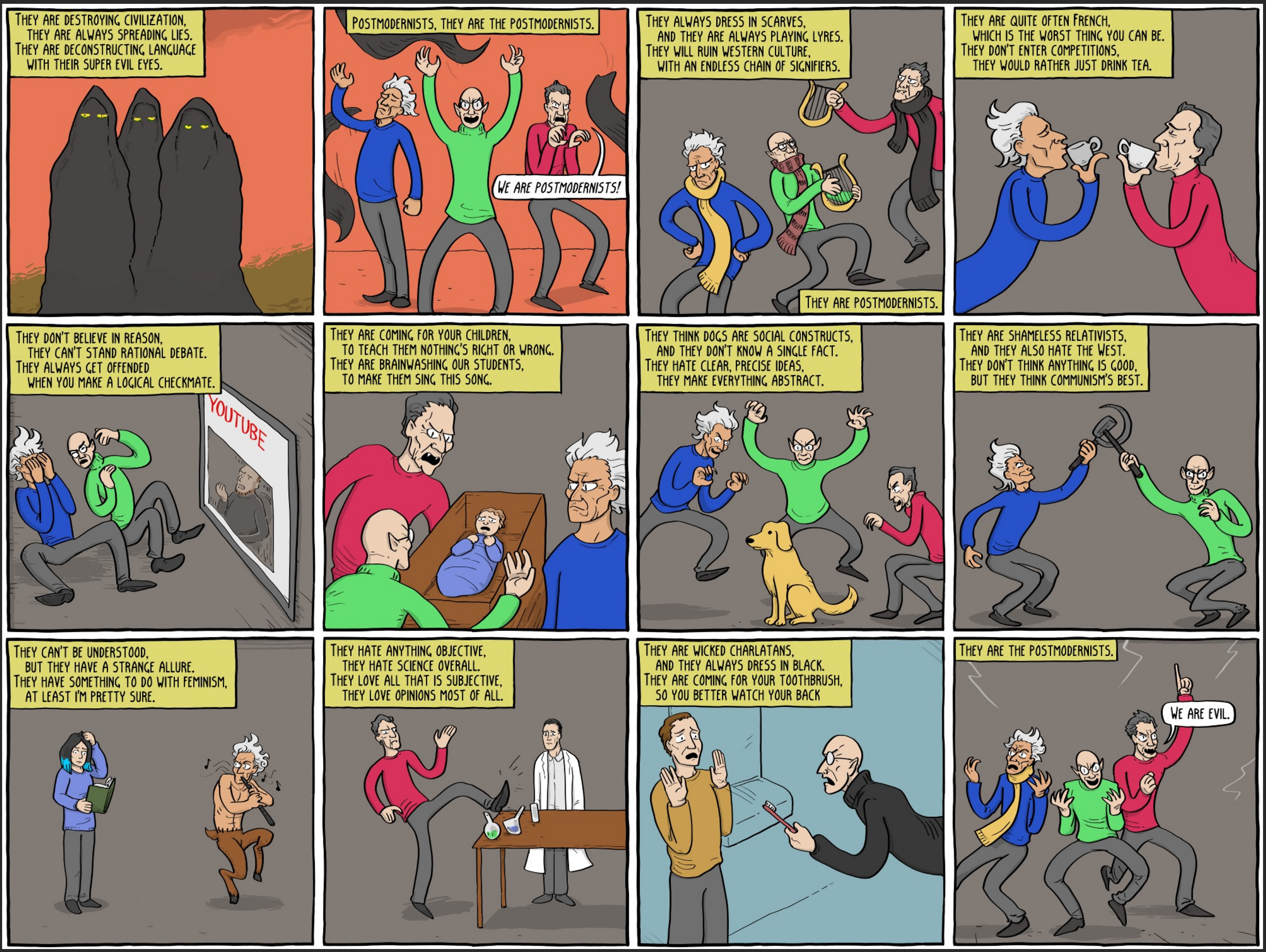
fuck gender essentialism

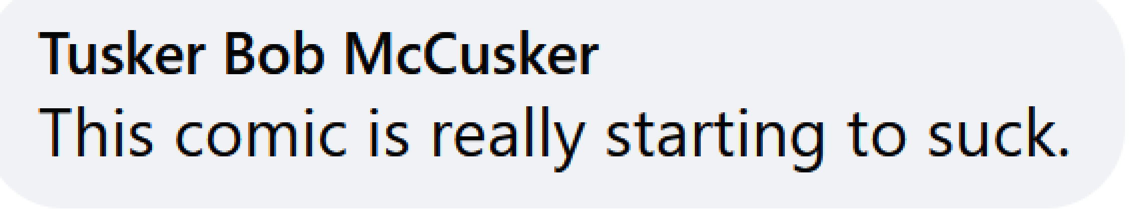
growing awareness that women are seemingly not essentially different from men
women
I got you!
I got you, sister
Jordan Peterson
women
"common sense" arguments about sexual difference
Oh, no, you don't!



Tusker Bob McCusker
"Gender essentialism" is immoral and unreasonable. Let's work to end the sexual segregation of sporting events. Differential outcomes between the "sexes" at the Olympics are not "facts", they are socially constructed oppression. As Plato correctly pointed out, the spatiotemporal material world is an illusion and nothing can be known about it, despite the claims made on behalf of that non-knowledge, natural science. "Women" can run as fast, jump as high, lift as much weight, as "men", and besides, the body is an "inessential" element in human existence. Our essence can exist perfectly well without it. Anatomy, chromosomes and the endocrine system are beside the point. Infants can gestate in the bodies of "men" because objectivity is a Eurocentric, hegemonic, phallocentric, logocentric, colonialist lie. After all, Plato was an egalitarian thinker who regarded envy as a virtue. The collective solipsism of claiming that external reality is whatever we decide we want it to be is the only way to shrug off the burden of privileged white male cis-heteronormativity!

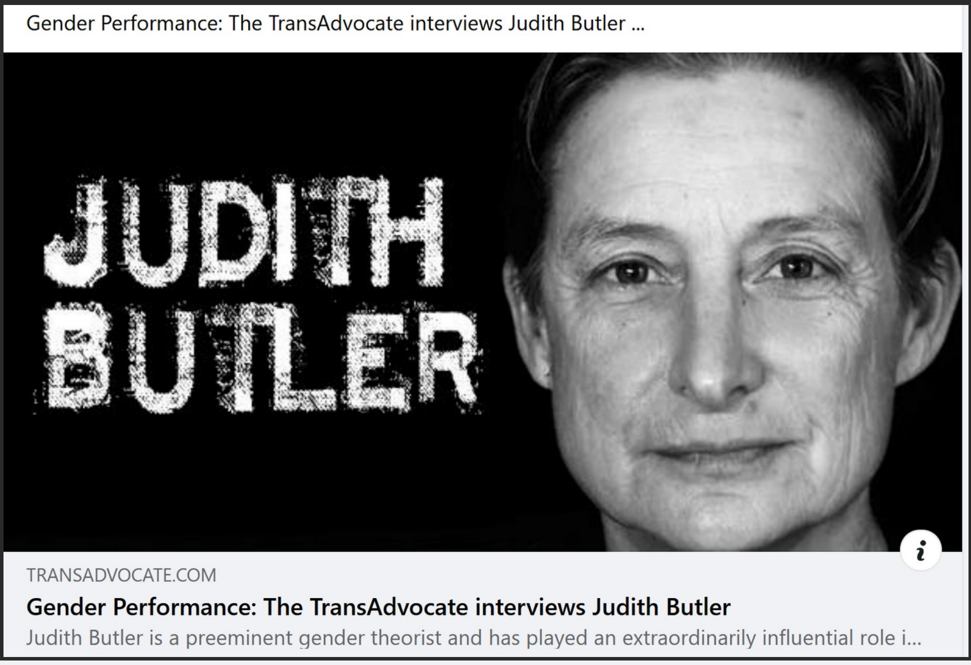
“Existentialist Comic”


THEY ARE DESTROYING CIVILIZATION,
THEY ARE ALWAYS SPREADING LIES.
THEY ARE DECONSTRUCTING LANGUAGE
WITH THEIR SUPER EVIL EYES.
POSTMODERNISTS, THEY ARE THE POSTMODERNISTS.
WE ARE POSTMODERNISTS!
THEY ALWAYS DRESS IN SCARVES,
AND THEY ARE ALWAYS PLAYING LYRES.
THEY WILL RUIN WESTERN CULTURE,
WITH AN ENDLESS CHAIN OF SIGNIFIERS.
THEY ARE POSTMODERNISTS.
THEY ARE QUITE OFTEN FRENCH,
WHICH IS THE WORST THING YOU CAN BE.
THEY DON'T ENTER COMPETITIONS,
THEY WOULD RATHER JUST DRINK TEA.
THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN REASON,
THEY CAN'T STAND RATIONAL DEBATE.
THEY ALWAYS GET OFFENDED
WHEN YOU MAKE A LOGICAL CHECKMATE.
YOUTUBE
THEY ARE COMING FOR YOUR CHILDREN,
TO TEACH THEM NOTHING'S RIGHT OR WRONG.
THEY ARE BRAINWASHING OUR STUDENTS,
TO MAKE THEM SING THIS SONG.
THEY THINK DOGS ARE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS,
AND THEY DON'T KNOW A SINGLE FACT.
THEY HATE CLEAR, PRECISE IDEAS,
THEY MAKE EVERYTHING ABSTRACT.
THEY ARE SHAMELESS RELATIVISTS,
AND THEY ALSO HATE THE WEST.
THEY DON'T THINK ANYTHING IS GOOD,
BUT THEY THINK COMMUNISM'S BEST.
THEY CAN'T BE UNDERSTOOD,
BUT THEY HAVE A STRANGE ALLURE.
THEY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH FEMINISM,
AT LEAST I'M PRETTY SURE.
THEY HATE ANYTHING OBJECTIVE,
THEY HATE SCIENCE OVERALL.
THEY LOVE ALL THAT IS SUBJECTIVE,
THEY LOVE OPINIONS MOST OF ALL.
THEY ARE WICKED CHARLATANS,
AND THEY ALWAYS DRESS IN BLACK.
THEY ARE COMING FOR YOUR TOOTHBRUSH,
SO YOU BETTER WATCH YOUR BACK
THEY ARE THE POSTMODERNISTS.
WE ARE EVIL.



Tusker Bob McCusker

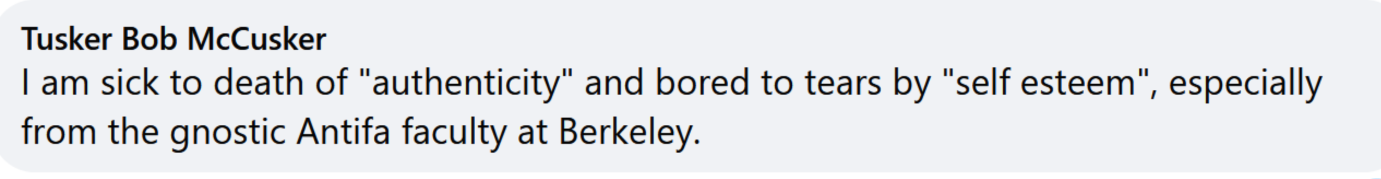
This comic is really starting to suck.

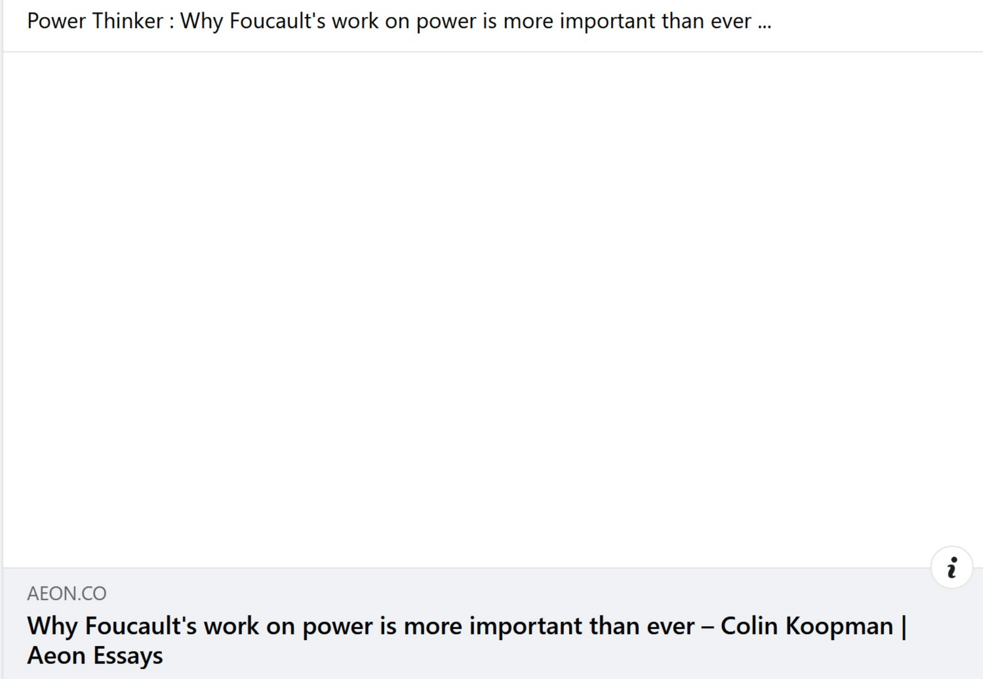

Gender Performance: The TransAdvocate interviews Judith Butler ...

TRANSADVOCATE.COM

Gender Performance: The TransAdvocate interviews Judith Butler

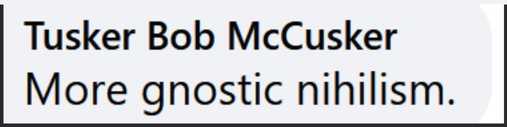
Judith Butler is a preeminent gender theorist and has played an extraordinarily influential role i...

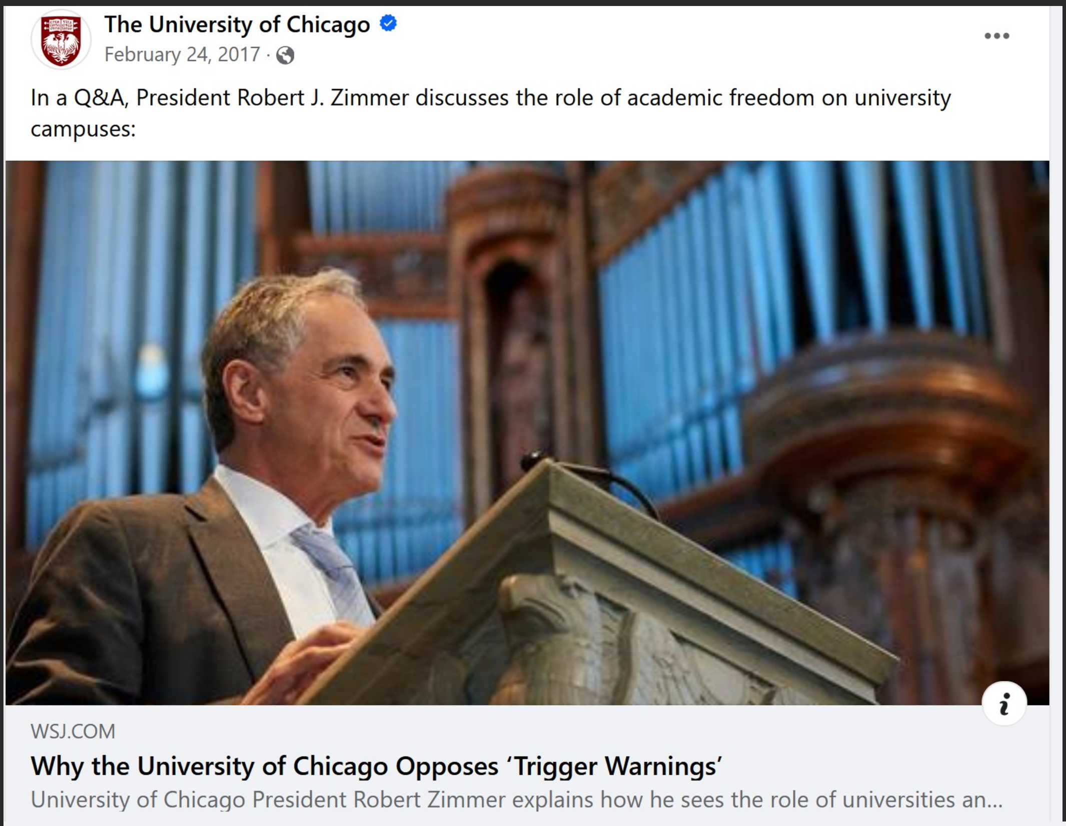

Tusker Bob McCusker
I am sick to death of "authenticity" and bored to tears by "self esteem", especially from the gnostic Antifa faculty at Berkeley.


Power Thinker : Why Foucault's work on power is more important than ever ...

AEON.CO

Why Foucault's work on power is more important than ever – Colin Koopman | Aeon Essays


Tusker Bob McCusker
More gnostic nihilism.



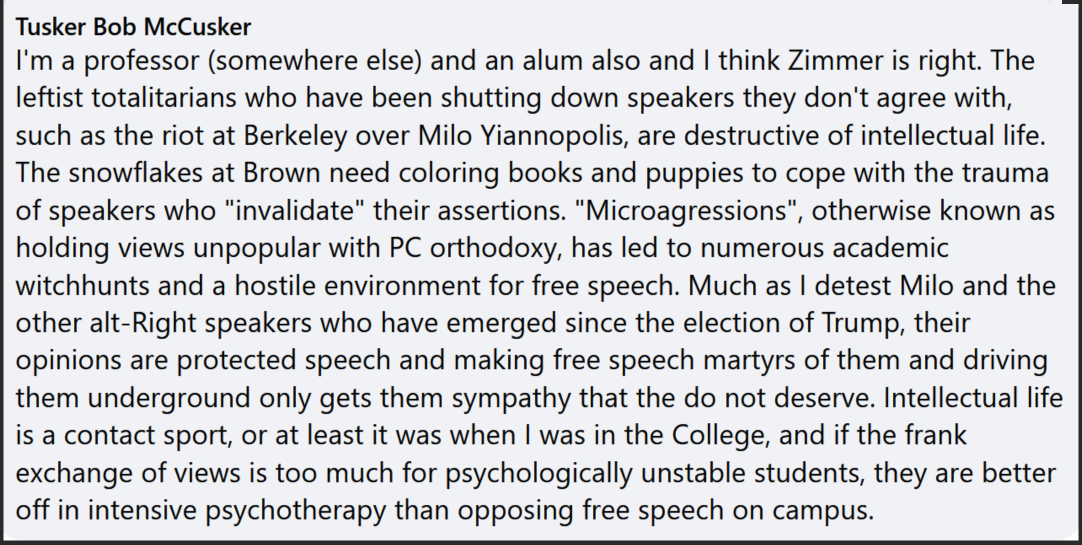
The University of Chicago
February 24, 2017 ·

In a Q&A, President Robert J. Zimmer discusses the role of academic freedom on university campuses:

WSJ.COM

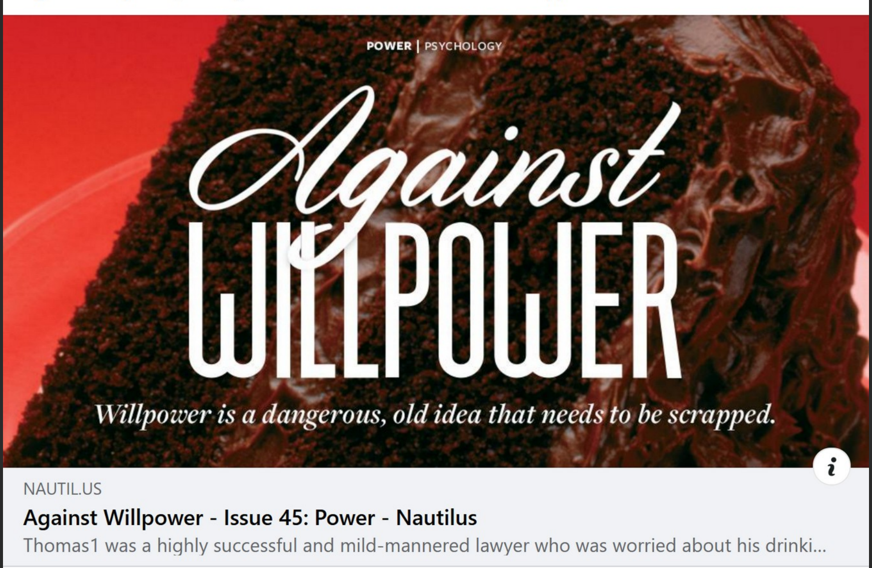
Why the University of Chicago Opposes ‘Trigger Warnings’

University of Chicago President Robert Zimmer explains how he sees the role of universities an...



Tusker Bob McCusker

I'm a professor (somewhere else) and an alum also and I think Zimmer is right. The leftist totalitarians who have been shutting down speakers they don't agree with, such as the riot at Berkeley over Milo Yiannopolis, are destructive of intellectual life. The snowflakes at Brown need coloring books and puppies to cope with the trauma of speakers who "invalidate" their assertions. "Microagressions", otherwise known as holding views unpopular with PC orthodoxy, has led to numerous academic witchhunts and a hostile environment for free speech. Much as I detest Milo and the other alt-Right speakers who have emerged since the election of Trump, their opinions are protected speech and making free speech martyrs of them and driving them underground only gets them sympathy that the do not deserve. Intellectual life is a contact sport, or at least it was when I was in the College, and if the frank exchange of views is too much for psychologically unstable students, they are better off in intensive psychotherapy than opposing free speech on campus.

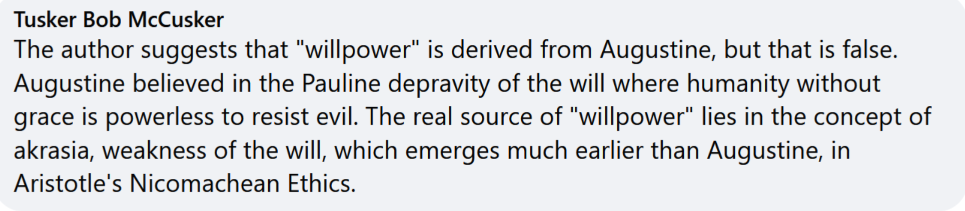

POWER | PSYCHOLOGY
Against
WILLPOWER
Willpower is a dangerous, old idea that needs to be scrapped.

Against Willpower, a dangerous old idea that needs to be scrapped ...

NAUTIL.US

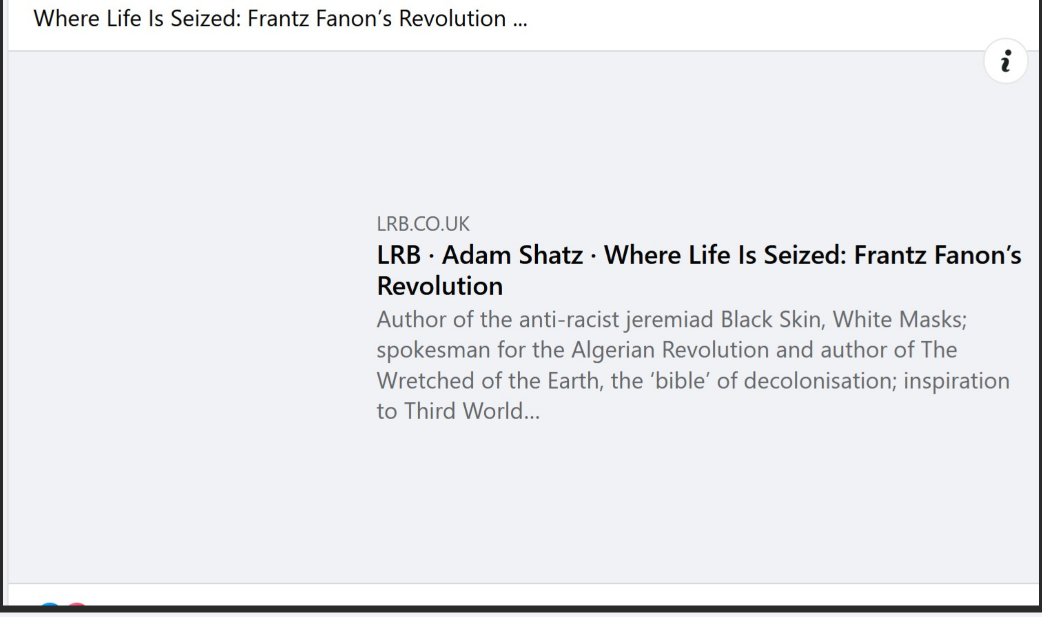
Against Willpower - Issue 45: Power - Nautilus

Thomas1 was a highly successful and mild-mannered lawyer who was worried about his drinki...



Tusker Bob McCusker

The author suggests that "willpower" is derived from Augustine, but that is false. Augustine believed in the Pauline depravity of the will where humanity without grace is powerless to resist evil. The real source of "willpower" lies in the concept of akrasia, weakness of the will, which emerges much earlier than Augustine, in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics.

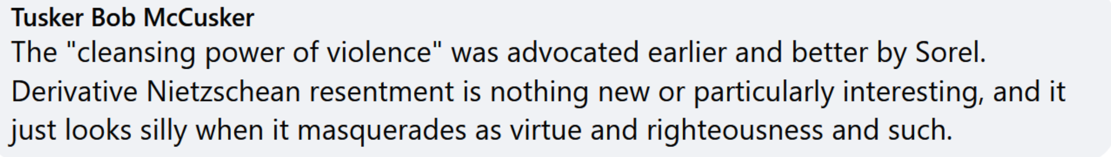


Where Life Is Seized: Frantz Fanon's Revolution ...

LRB.CO.UK

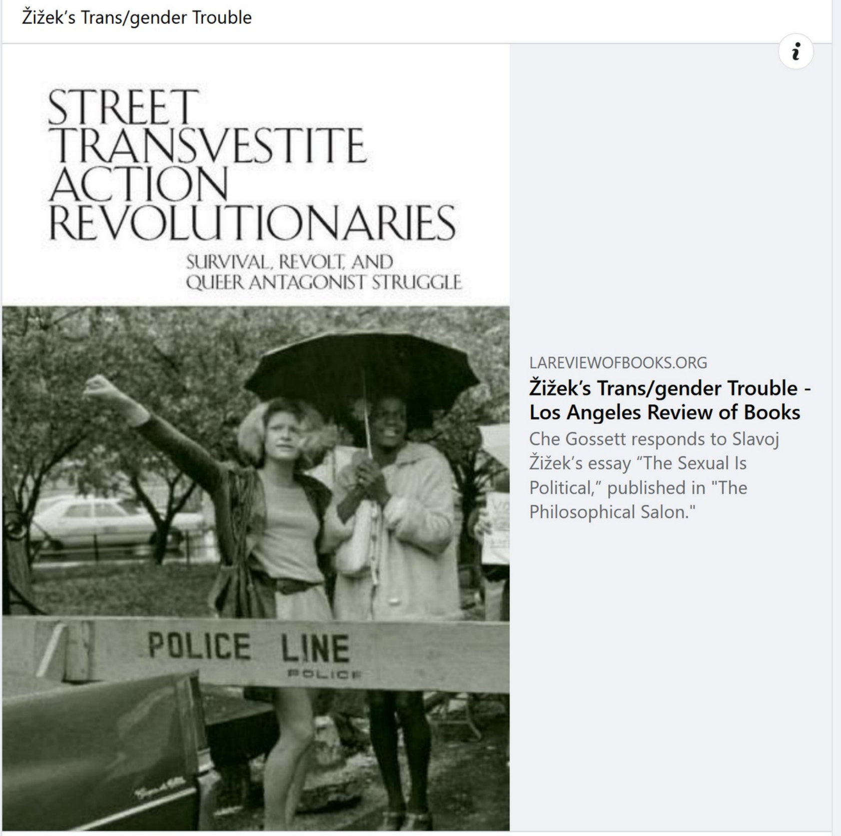
LRB · Adam Shatz · Where Life Is Seized: Frantz Fanon's Revolution

Author of the anti-racist jeremiad Black Skin, White Masks; spokesman for the Algerian Revolution and author of The Wretched of the Earth, the 'bible' of decolonisation; inspiration to Third World...



Tusker Bob McCusker

The "cleansing power of violence" was advocated earlier and better by Sorel. Derivative Nietzschean resentment is nothing new or particularly interesting, and it just looks silly when it masquerades as virtue and righteousness and such.

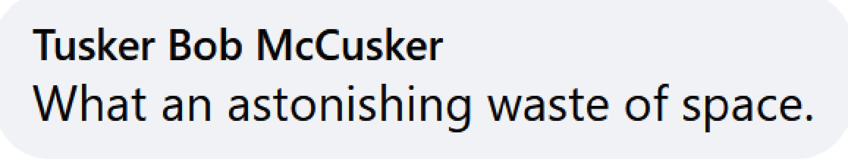

STREET TRANSVESTITE ACTION REVOLUTIONARIES
SURVIVAL, REVOLT, AND QUEER ANTAGONIST STRUGGLE
POLICE LINE
POLICE

Žižek's Trans/gender Trouble

LAREVIEWOFBOOKS.ORG

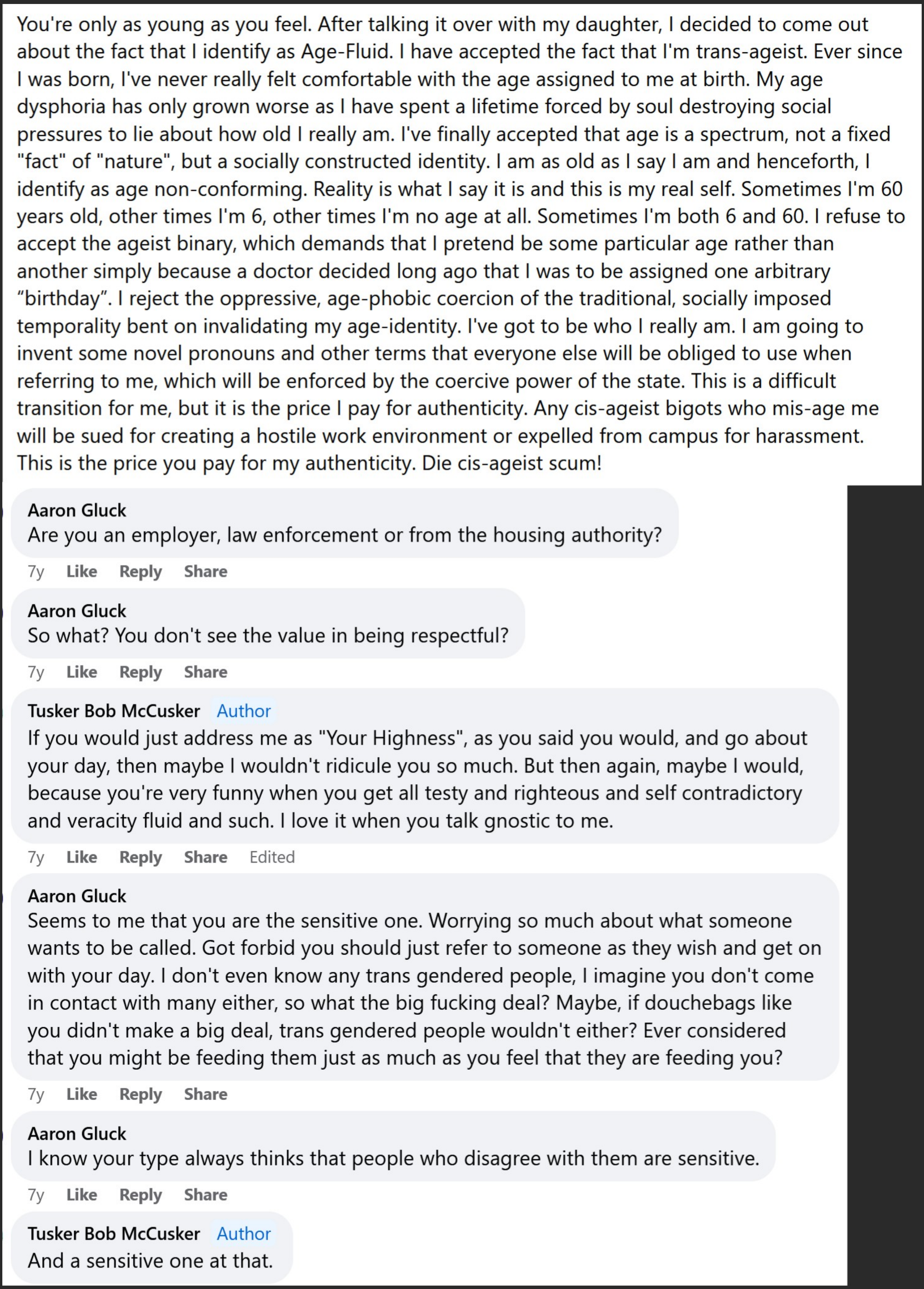
Žižek's Trans/gender Trouble - Los Angeles Review of Books

Che Gossett responds to Slavoj Žižek's essay "The Sexual Is Political," published in "The Philosophical Salon."



Tusker Bob McCusker

What an astonishing waste of space.



You're only as young as you feel. After talking it over with my daughter, I decided to come out about the fact that I identify as Age-Fluid. I have accepted the fact that I'm trans-ageist. Ever since I was born, I've never really felt comfortable with the age assigned to me at birth. My age dysphoria has only grown worse as I have spent a lifetime forced by soul destroying social pressures to lie about how old I really am. I've finally accepted that age is a spectrum, not a fixed "fact" of "nature", but a socially constructed identity. I am as old as I say I am and henceforth, I identify as age non-conforming. Reality is what I say it is and this is my real self. Sometimes I'm 60 years old, other times I'm 6, other times I'm no age at all. Sometimes I'm both 6 and 60. I refuse to accept the ageist binary, which demands that I pretend be some particular age rather than another simply because a doctor decided long ago that I was to be assigned one arbitrary “birthday”. I reject the oppressive, age-phobic coercion of the traditional, socially imposed temporality bent on invalidating my age-identity. I've got to be who I really am. I am going to invent some novel pronouns and other terms that everyone else will be obliged to use when referring to me, which will be enforced by the coercive power of the state. This is a difficult transition for me, but it is the price I pay for authenticity. Any cis-ageist bigots who mis-age me will be sued for creating a hostile work environment or expelled from campus for harassment. This is the price you pay for my authenticity. Die cis-ageist scum!

Aaron Gluck
Are you an employer, law enforcement or from the housing authority?

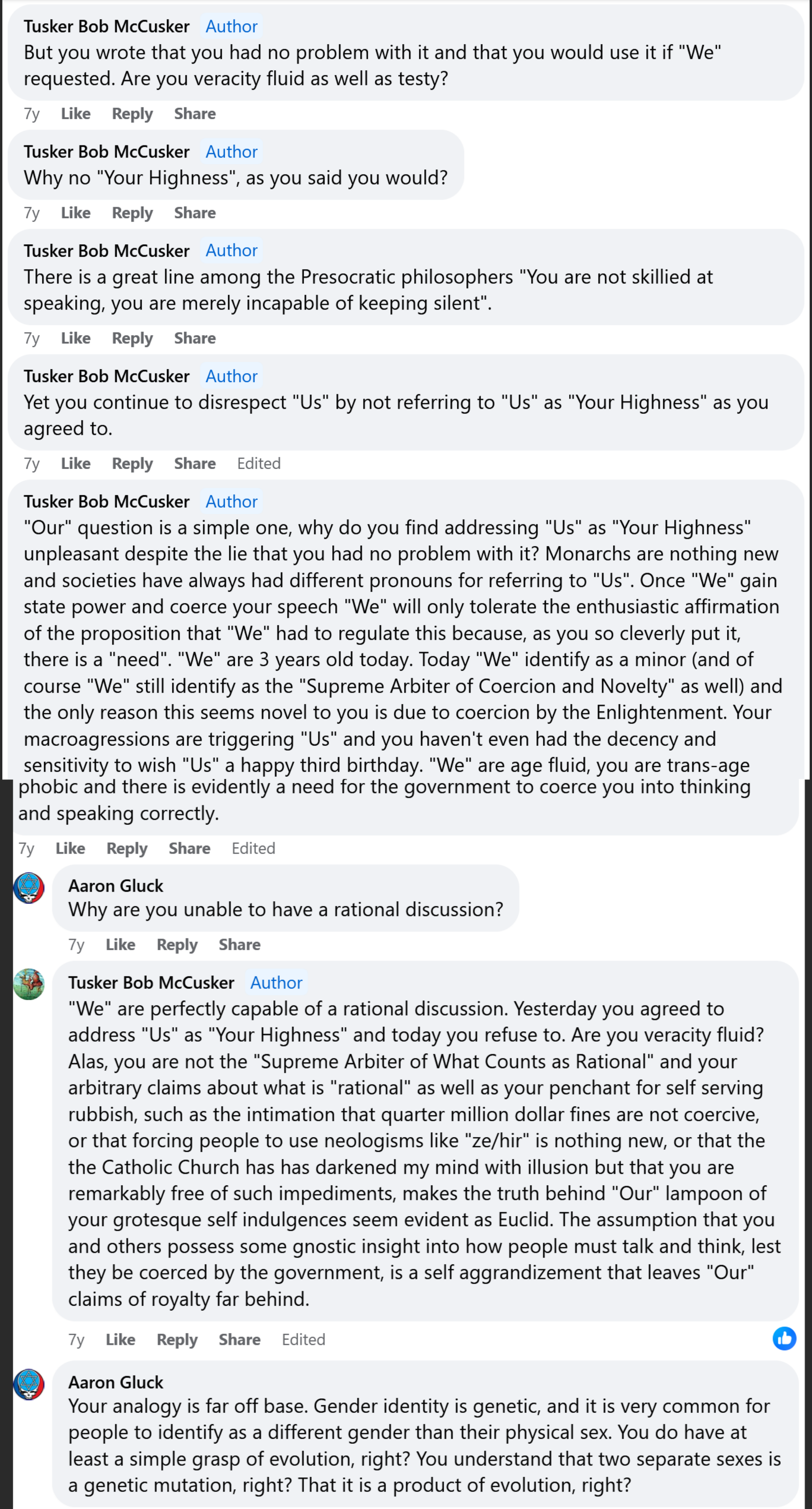
Aaron Gluck
So what? You don't see the value in being respectful?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
If you would just address me as "Your Highness", as you said you would, and go about your day, then maybe I wouldn't ridicule you so much. But then again, maybe I would, because you're very funny when you get all testy and righteous and self contradictory and veracity fluid and such. I love it when you talk gnostic to me.

Aaron Gluck
Seems to me that you are the sensitive one. Worrying so much about what someone wants to be called. Got forbid you should just refer to someone as they wish and get on with your day. I don't even know any trans gendered people, I imagine you don't come in contact with many either, so what the big fucking deal? Maybe, if douchebags like you didn't make a big deal, trans gendered people wouldn't either? Ever considered that you might be feeding them just as much as you feel that they are feeding you?

Aaron Gluck
I know your type always thinks that people who disagree with them are sensitive.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
And a sensitive one at that.



Tusker Bob McCusker Author

But you wrote that you had no problem with it and that you would use it if "We" requested. Are you veracity fluid as well as testy?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author

Why no "Your Highness", as you said you would?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author

There is a great line among the Presocratic philosophers "You are not skillied at speaking, you are merely incapable of keeping silent".

Tusker Bob McCusker Author

Yet you continue to disrespect "Us" by not referring to "Us" as "Your Highness" as you agreed to.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author

"Our" question is a simple one, why do you find addressing "Us" as "Your Highness" unpleasant despite the lie that you had no problem with it? Monarchs are nothing new and societies have always had different pronouns for referring to "Us". Once "We" gain state power and coerce your speech "We" will only tolerate the enthusiastic affirmation of the proposition that "We" had to regulate this because, as you so cleverly put it, there is a "need". "We" are 3 years old today. Today "We" identify as a minor (and of course "We" still identify as the "Supreme Arbiter of Coercion and Novelty" as well) and the only reason this seems novel to you is due to coercion by the Enlightenment. Your macroagressions are triggering "Us" and you haven't even had the decency and sensitivity to wish "Us" a happy third birthday. "We" are age fluid, you are trans-age phobic and there is evidently a need for the government to coerce you into thinking and speaking correctly.

Aaron Gluck

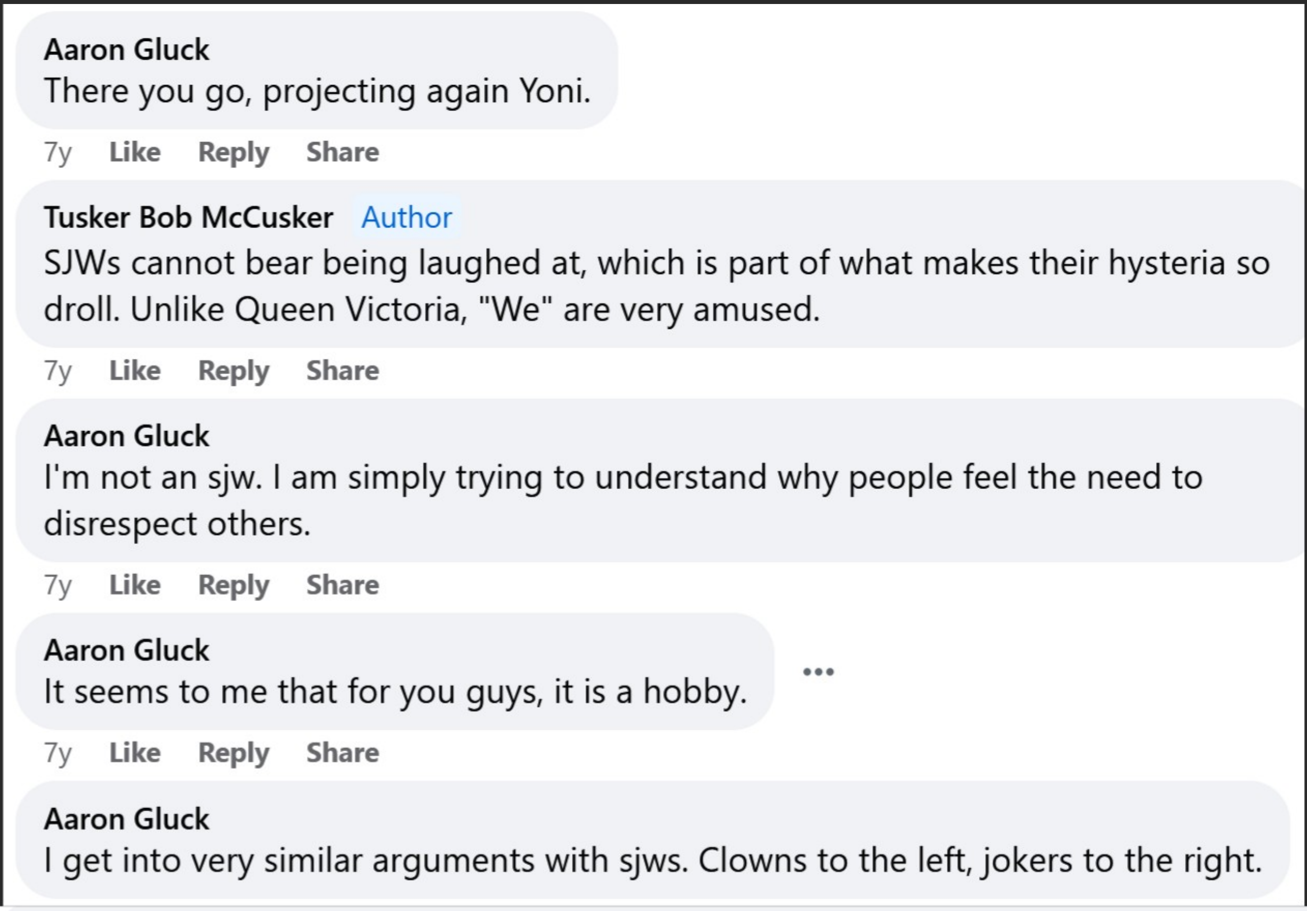
Why are you unable to have a rational discussion?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author

"We" are perfectly capable of a rational discussion. Yesterday you agreed to address "Us" as "Your Highness" and today you refuse to. Are you veracity fluid? Alas, you are not the "Supreme Arbiter of What Counts as Rational" and your arbitrary claims about what is "rational" as well as your penchant for self serving rubbish, such as the intimation that quarter million dollar fines are not coercive, or that forcing people to use neologisms like "ze/hir" is nothing new, or that the the Catholic Church has has darkened my mind with illusion but that you are remarkably free of such impediments, makes the truth behind "Our" lampoon of your grotesque self indulgences seem evident as Euclid. The assumption that you and others possess some gnostic insight into how people must talk and think, lest they be coerced by the government, is a self aggrandizement that leaves "Our" claims of royalty far behind.

Aaron Gluck

Your analogy is far off base. Gender identity is genetic, and it is very common for people to identify as a different gender than their physical sex. You do have at least a simple grasp of evolution, right? You understand that two separate sexes is a genetic mutation, right? That it is a product of evolution, right?



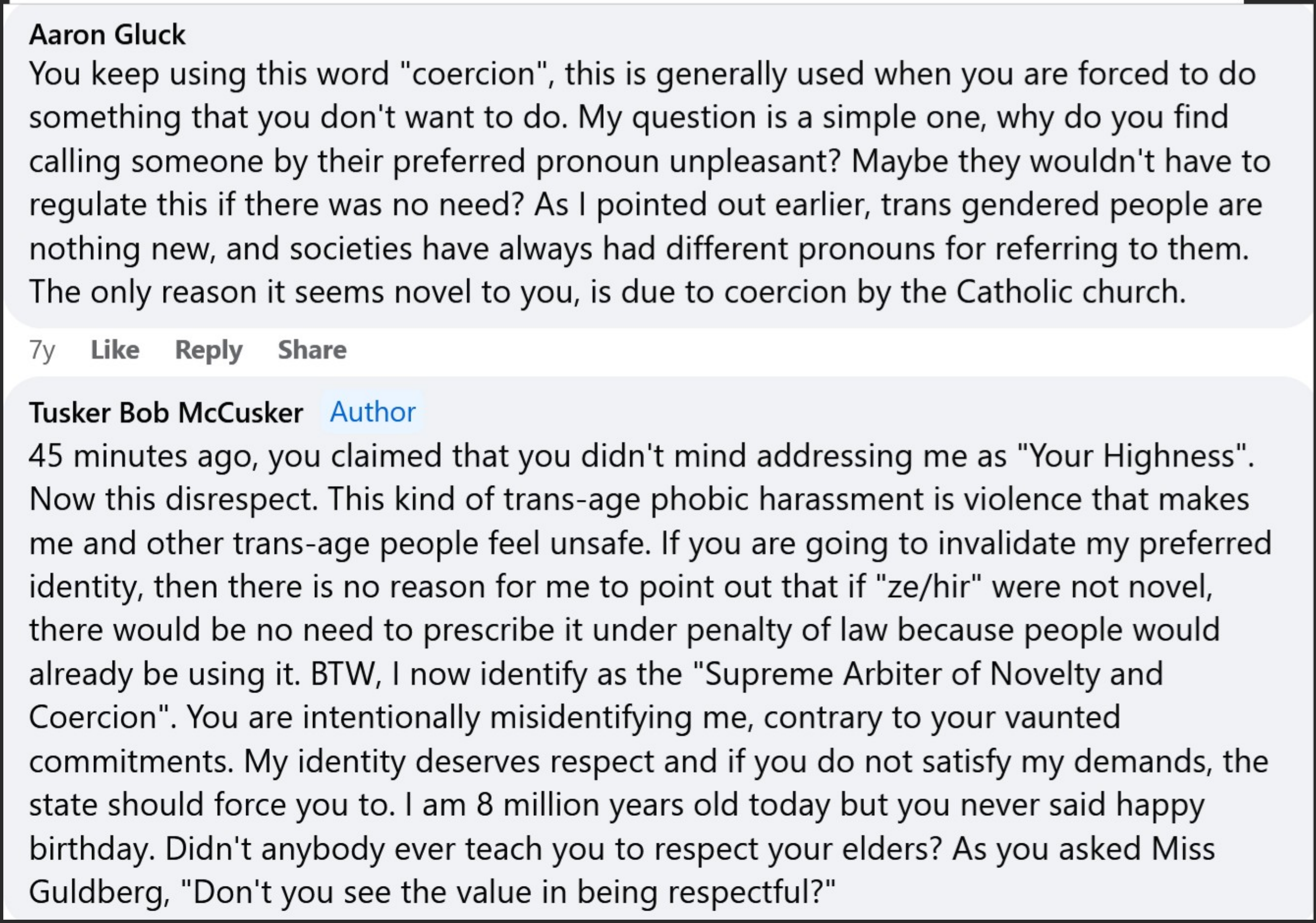
Aaron Gluck
There you go, projecting again Yoni.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
SJWs cannot bear being laughed at, which is part of what makes their hysteria so droll. Unlike Queen Victoria, "We" are very amused.

Aaron Gluck
I'm not an sjw. I am simply trying to understand why people feel the need to disrespect others.

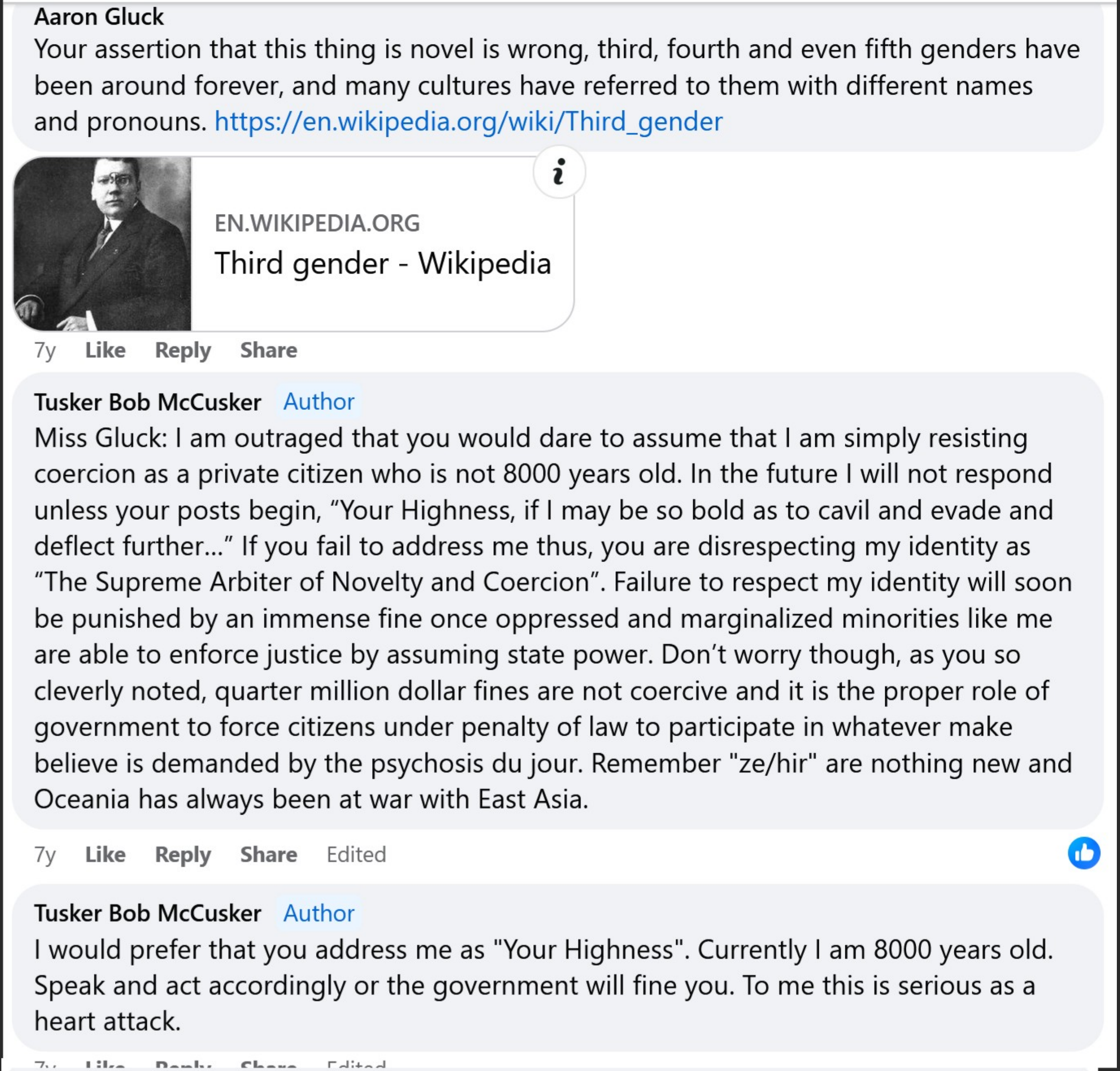
Aaron Gluck
It seems to me that for you guys, it is a hobby.

Aaron Gluck
I get into very similar arguments with sjws. Clowns to the left, jokers to the right.



Aaron Gluck
You keep using this word "coercion", this is generally used when you are forced to do something that you don't want to do. My question is a simple one, why do you find calling someone by their preferred pronoun unpleasant? Maybe they wouldn't have to regulate this if there was no need? As I pointed out earlier, trans gendered people are nothing new, and societies have always had different pronouns for referring to them. The only reason it seems novel to you, is due to coercion by the Catholic church.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
45 minutes ago, you claimed that you didn't mind addressing me as "Your Highness". Now this disrespect. This kind of trans-age phobic harassment is violence that makes me and other trans-age people feel unsafe. If you are going to invalidate my preferred identity, then there is no reason for me to point out that if "ze/hir" were not novel, there would be no need to prescribe it under penalty of law because people would already be using it. BTW, I now identify as the "Supreme Arbiter of Novelty and Coercion". You are intentionally misidentifying me, contrary to your vaunted commitments. My identity deserves respect and if you do not satisfy my demands, the state should force you to. I am 8 million years old today but you never said happy birthday. Didn't anybody ever teach you to respect your elders? As you asked Miss Guldberg, "Don't you see the value in being respectful?"

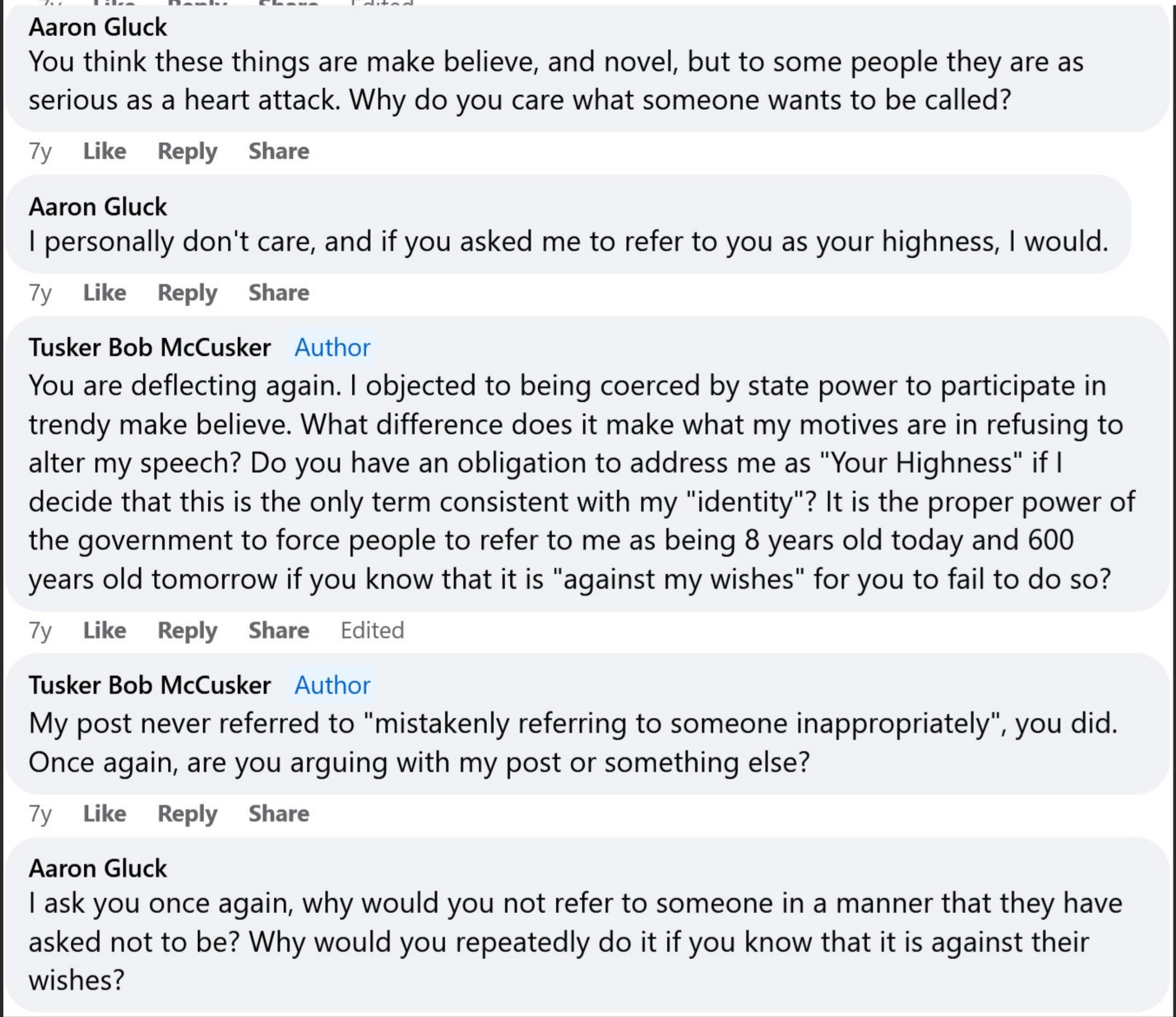


Aaron Gluck
Your assertion that this thing is novel is wrong, third, fourth and even fifth genders have been around forever, and many cultures have referred to them with different names and pronouns. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_gender

EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG
Third gender - Wikipedia

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Miss Gluck: I am outraged that you would dare to assume that I am simply resisting coercion as a private citizen who is not 8000 years old. In the future I will not respond unless your posts begin, “Your Highness, if I may be so bold as to cavil and evade and deflect further…” If you fail to address me thus, you are disrespecting my identity as “The Supreme Arbiter of Novelty and Coercion”. Failure to respect my identity will soon be punished by an immense fine once oppressed and marginalized minorities like me are able to enforce justice by assuming state power. Don’t worry though, as you so cleverly noted, quarter million dollar fines are not coercive and it is the proper role of government to force citizens under penalty of law to participate in whatever make believe is demanded by the psychosis du jour. Remember "ze/hir" are nothing new and Oceania has always been at war with East Asia.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
I would prefer that you address me as "Your Highness". Currently I am 8000 years old. Speak and act accordingly or the government will fine you. To me this is serious as a heart attack.



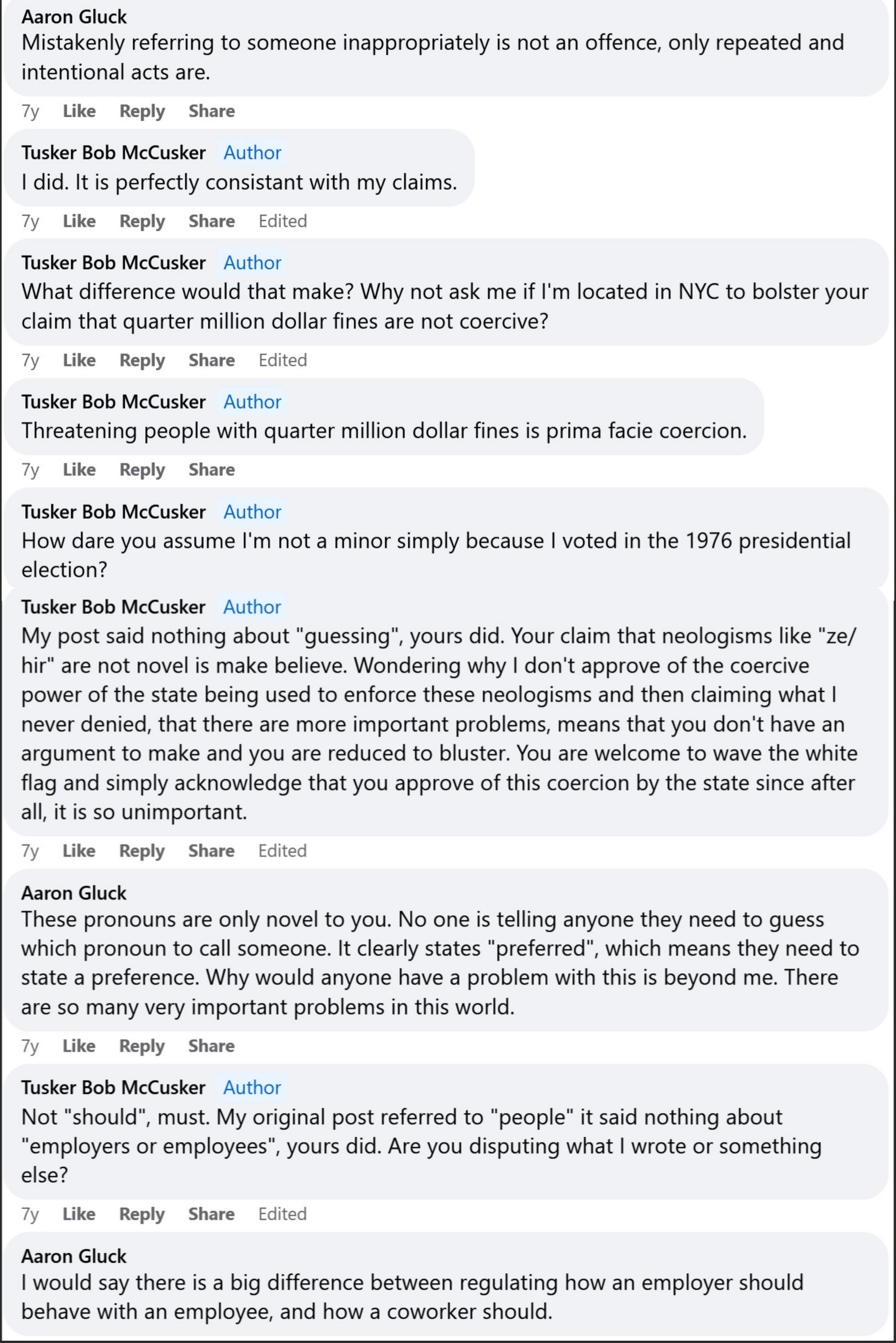
Aaron Gluck
You think these things are make believe, and novel, but to some people they are as serious as a heart attack. Why do you care what someone wants to be called?

Aaron Gluck
I personally don't care, and if you asked me to refer to you as your highness, I would.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
You are deflecting again. I objected to being coerced by state power to participate in trendy make believe. What difference does it make what my motives are in refusing to alter my speech? Do you have an obligation to address me as "Your Highness" if I decide that this is the only term consistent with my "identity"? It is the proper power of the government to force people to refer to me as being 8 years old today and 600 years old tomorrow if you know that it is "against my wishes" for you to fail to do so?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
My post never referred to "mistakenly referring to someone inappropriately", you did. Once again, are you arguing with my post or something else?

Aaron Gluck
I ask you once again, why would you not refer to someone in a manner that they have asked not to be? Why would you repeatedly do it if you know that it is against their wishes?



Aaron Gluck
Mistakenly referring to someone inappropriately is not an offence, only repeated and intentional acts are.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
I did. It is perfectly consistant with my claims.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
What difference would that make? Why not ask me if I'm located in NYC to bolster your claim that quarter million dollar fines are not coercive?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Threatening people with quarter million dollar fines is prima facie coercion.

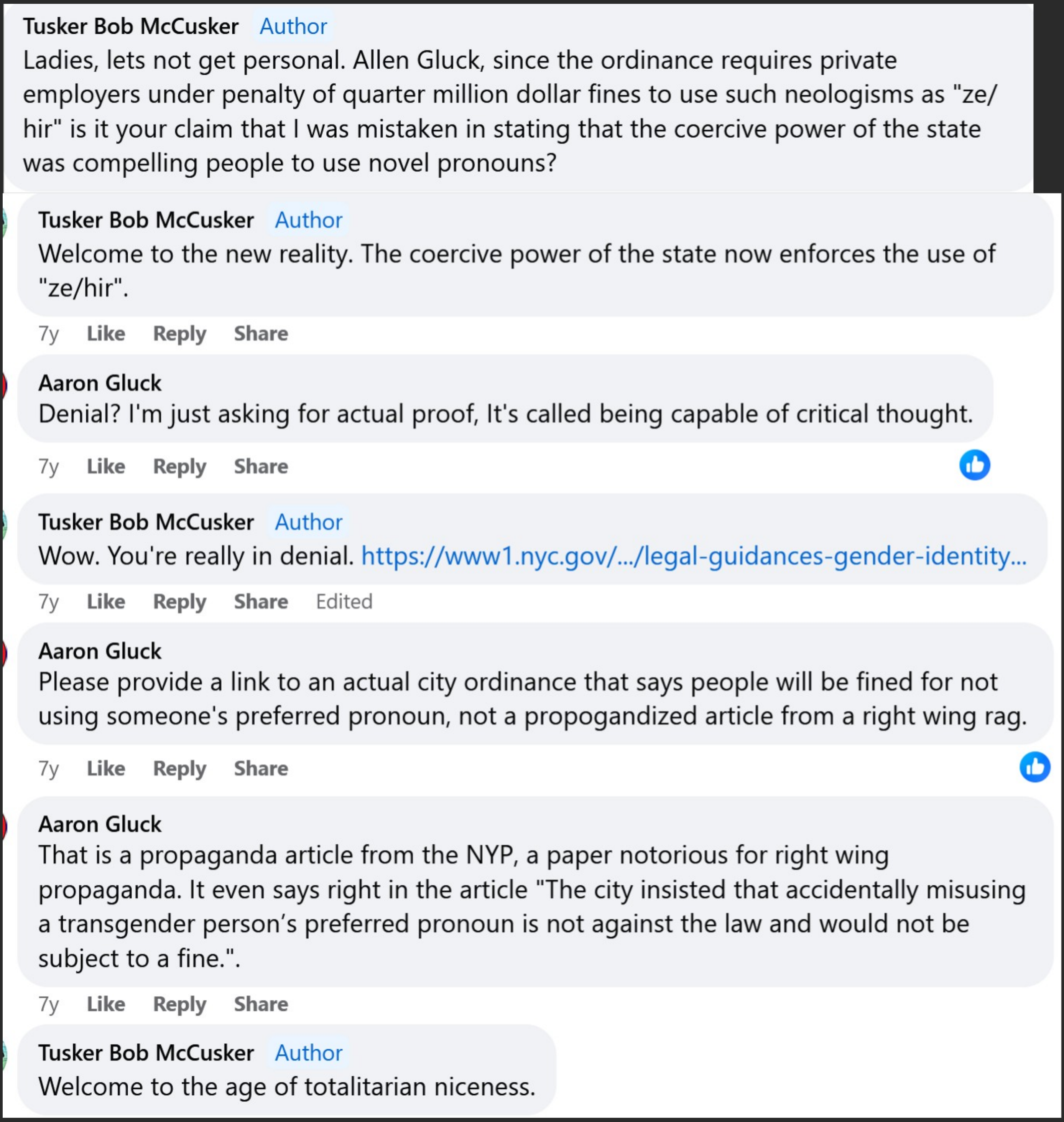
Tusker Bob McCusker Author
How dare you assume I'm not a minor simply because I voted in the 1976 presidential election?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
My post said nothing about "guessing", yours did. Your claim that neologisms like "ze/hir" are not novel is make believe. Wondering why I don't approve of the coercive power of the state being used to enforce these neologisms and then claiming what I never denied, that there are more important problems, means that you don't have an argument to make and you are reduced to bluster. You are welcome to wave the white flag and simply acknowledge that you approve of this coercion by the state since after all, it is so unimportant.

Aaron Gluck
These pronouns are only novel to you. No one is telling anyone they need to guess which pronoun to call someone. It clearly states "preferred", which means they need to state a preference. Why would anyone have a problem with this is beyond me. There are so many very important problems in this world.

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Not "should", must. My original post referred to "people" it said nothing about "employers or employees", yours did. Are you disputing what I wrote or something else?

Aaron Gluck
I would say there is a big difference between regulating how an employer should behave with an employee, and how a coworker should.



Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Ladies, lets not get personal. Allen Gluck, since the ordinance requires private employers under penalty of quarter million dollar fines to use such neologisms as "ze/hir" is it your claim that I was mistaken in stating that the coercive power of the state was compelling people to use novel pronouns?

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Welcome to the new reality. The coercive power of the state now enforces the use of "ze/hir".

7y Like Reply Share

Aaron Gluck
Denial? I'm just asking for actual proof, It's called being capable of critical thought.

7y Like Reply Share

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Wow. You're really in denial. https://www1.nyc.gov/.../legal-guidances-gender-identity...

7y Like Reply Share Edited

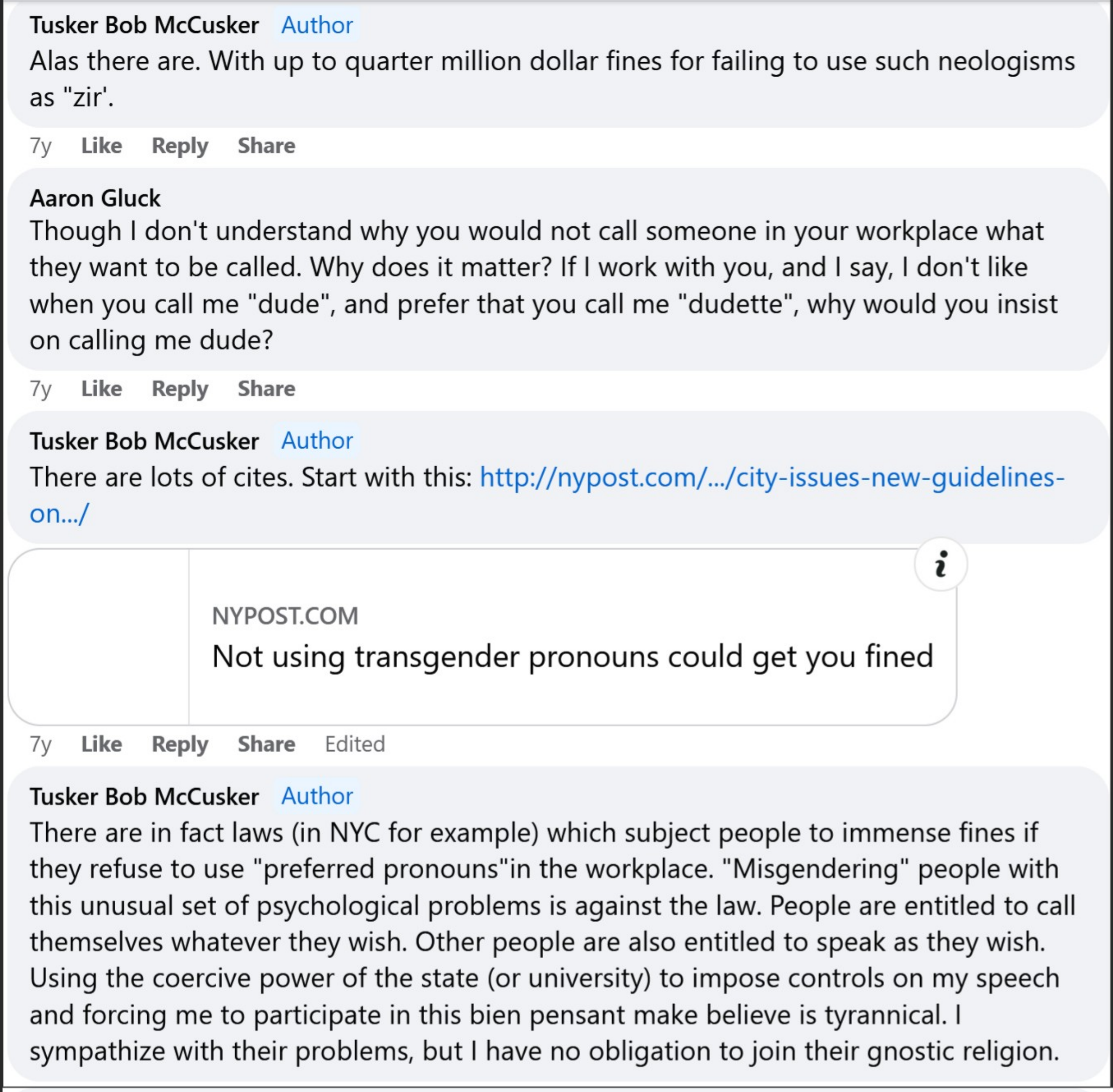
Aaron Gluck
Please provide a link to an actual city ordinance that says people will be fined for not using someone's preferred pronoun, not a propogandized article from a right wing rag.

7y Like Reply Share

Aaron Gluck
That is a propaganda article from the NYP, a paper notorious for right wing propaganda. It even says right in the article "The city insisted that accidentally misusing a transgender person's preferred pronoun is not against the law and would not be subject to a fine.".

7y Like Reply Share

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Welcome to the age of totalitarian niceness.



Tusker Bob McCusker Author
Alas there are. With up to quarter million dollar fines for failing to use such neologisms as "zir'.

7y Like Reply Share

Aaron Gluck
Though I don't understand why you would not call someone in your workplace what they want to be called. Why does it matter? If I work with you, and I say, I don't like when you call me "dude", and prefer that you call me "dudette", why would you insist on calling me dude?

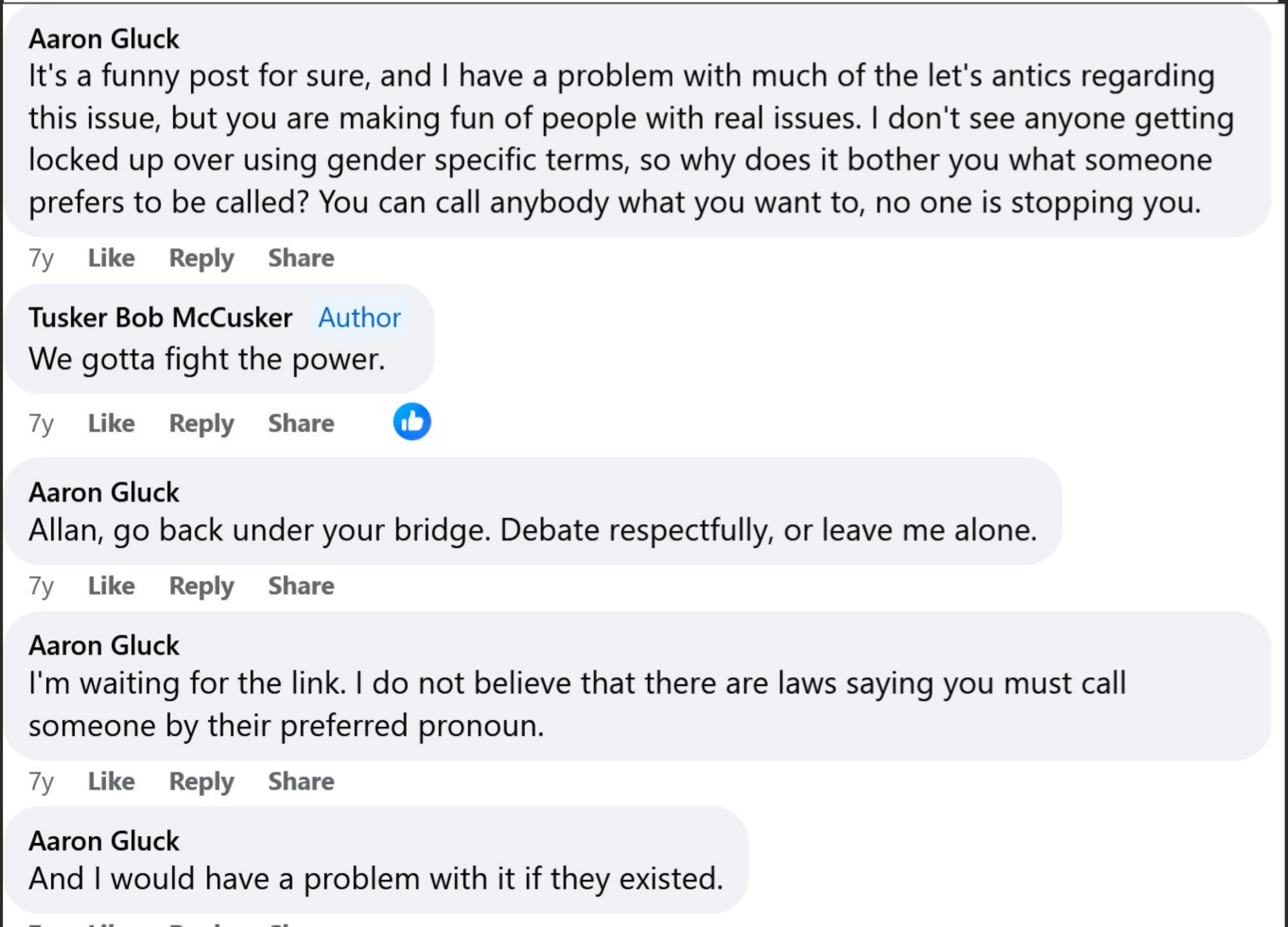
7y Like Reply Share

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
There are lots of cites. Start with this: http://nypost.com/.../city-issues-new-guidelines-on.../

NYPOST.COM
Not using transgender pronouns could get you fined

7y Like Reply Share Edited

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
There are in fact laws (in NYC for example) which subject people to immense fines if they refuse to use "preferred pronouns"in the workplace. "Misgendering" people with this unusual set of psychological problems is against the law. People are entitled to call themselves whatever they wish. Other people are also entitled to speak as they wish. Using the coercive power of the state (or university) to impose controls on my speech and forcing me to participate in this bien pensant make believe is tyrannical. I sympathize with their problems, but I have no obligation to join their gnostic religion.



Aaron Gluck
It's a funny post for sure, and I have a problem with much of the let's antics regarding this issue, but you are making fun of people with real issues. I don't see anyone getting locked up over using gender specific terms, so why does it bother you what someone prefers to be called? You can call anybody what you want to, no one is stopping you.

7y Like Reply Share

Tusker Bob McCusker Author
We gotta fight the power.

7y Like Reply Share

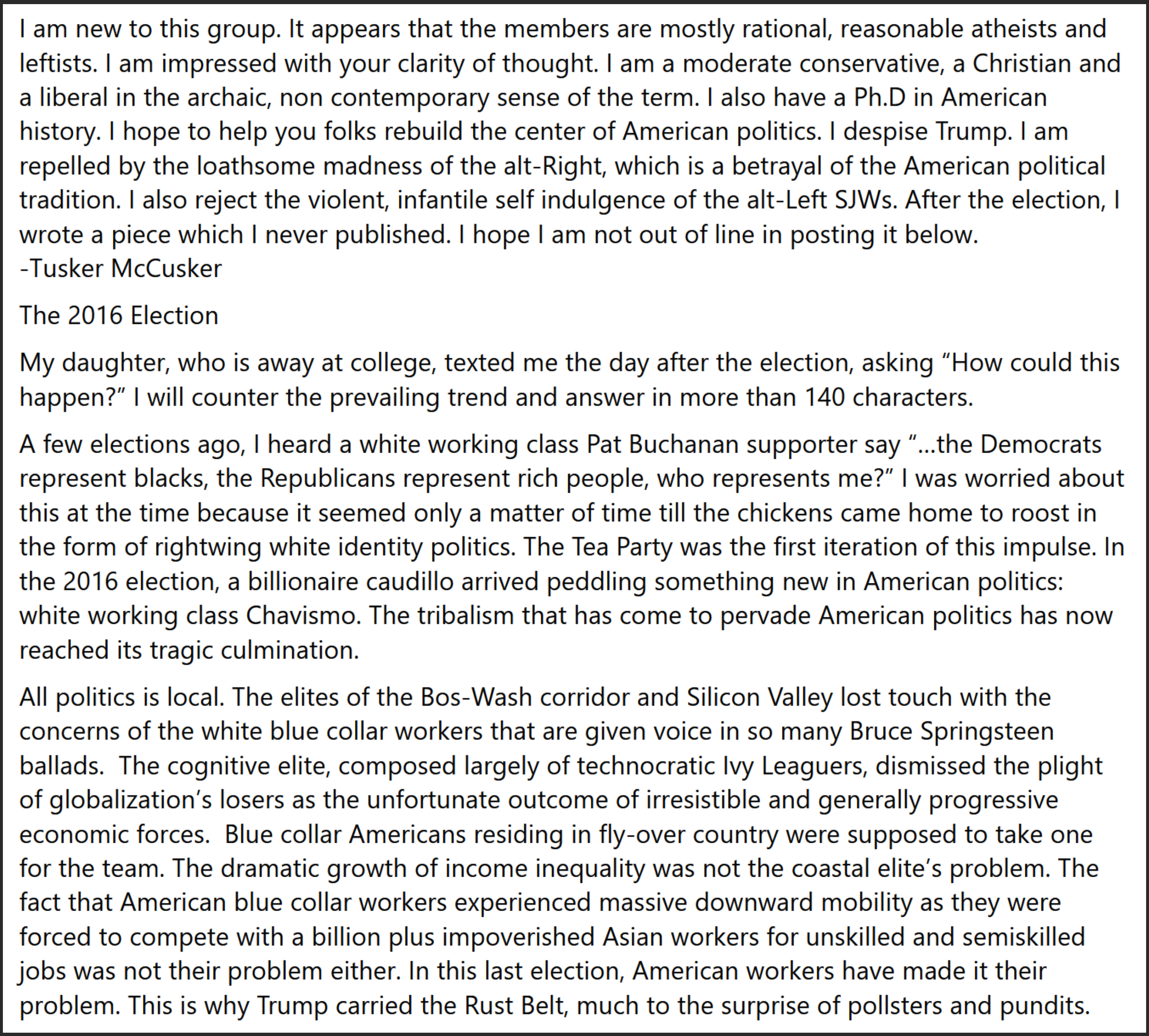
Aaron Gluck
Allan, go back under your bridge. Debate respectfully, or leave me alone.

7y Like Reply Share

Aaron Gluck
I'm waiting for the link. I do not believe that there are laws saying you must call someone by their preferred pronoun.

7y Like Reply Share

Aaron Gluck
And I would have a problem with it if they existed.



I am new to this group. It appears that the members are mostly rational, reasonable atheists and leftists. I am impressed with your clarity of thought. I am a moderate conservative, a Christian and a liberal in the archaic, non contemporary sense of the term. I also have a Ph.D in American history. I hope to help you folks rebuild the center of American politics. I despise Trump. I am repelled by the loathsome madness of the alt-Right, which is a betrayal of the American political tradition. I also reject the violent, infantile self indulgence of the alt-Left SJWs. After the election, I wrote a piece which I never published. I hope I am not out of line in posting it below.
-Tusker McCusker

The 2016 Election

My daughter, who is away at college, texted me the day after the election, asking "How could this happen?" I will counter the prevailing trend and answer in more than 140 characters.

A few elections ago, I heard a white working class Pat Buchanan supporter say "...the Democrats represent blacks, the Republicans represent rich people, who represents me?" I was worried about this at the time because it seemed only a matter of time till the chickens came home to roost in the form of rightwing white identity politics. The Tea Party was the first iteration of this impulse. In the 2016 election, a billionaire caudillo arrived peddling something new in American politics: white working class Chavismo. The tribalism that has come to pervade American politics has now reached its tragic culmination.

All politics is local. The elites of the Bos-Wash corridor and Silicon Valley lost touch with the concerns of the white blue collar workers that are given voice in so many Bruce Springsteen ballads. The cognitive elite, composed largely of technocratic Ivy Leaguers, dismissed the plight of globalization's losers as the unfortunate outcome of irresistible and generally progressive economic forces. Blue collar Americans residing in fly-over country were supposed to take one for the team. The dramatic growth of income inequality was not the coastal elite's problem. The fact that American blue collar workers experienced massive downward mobility as they were forced to compete with a billion plus impoverished Asian workers for unskilled and semiskilled jobs was not their problem either. In this last election, American workers have made it their problem. This is why Trump carried the Rust Belt, much to the surprise of pollsters and pundits.

By 2016, the Democrats had largely abandoned their traditional economic class based politics for the "identity" politics of victimized subgroups. "Intersectionality" and similar buzzwords replaced the "kitchen table" issues that had previously concerned a large swath of the white working class. Race, class and gender, the holy trinity of the academic left, was the focus of the Democratic leadership, although gender and race were greatly highlighted at the expense of class. This had been particularly evident in the Obama administration. The core of the Democratic coalition going back to the New Deal was the unionized white blue collar worker. The current Democratic party is focused on identity based interest groups combined with white collar, college educated people who have managerial jobs, soft hands and 401Ks: it is now a coalition of minority groups allied with the "winners" in the globalized information based economy.

The American electorate is unfamiliar with Davos. Sand Hill Road in Silicon Valley is a very atypical place, alien to the Americans who drive pick up trucks and change their own oil. The values of San Francisco are not those of Akron or Grand Rapids or Janesville or Scranton. Wall Street and Main Street have different priorities. It is testimony to the state of American political life that this needs mentioning. In an important new book, Hillbilly Elegy, J.D. Vance shows persuasively how the transformation of work in America has generated a hopelessness among the least educated inhabitants of white America. Trump was notorious for saying, "I love poorly educated people". They loved him right back, especially given the ill-disguised contempt they received from the political elites of both parties. They may not have much education, but they aren't stupid and they are fiercely proud. The white working class Trumpistas know perfectly well that Trump lacks even the rudiments of moral decency. He is simply their way of sharing the pain. If elites make them suffer, they will make sure elites suffer too.

Charles Murray, in Coming Apart shows that culture matters at least as much as economics, and that the decline of stabilizing institutions like family and community has reached dangerous levels among the white working class. The erosion of the values that made individuals productive citizens has eviscerated the life chances of the bottom half of white America. Standards of behavior have been declining for decades among the least affluent parts of the white population: the work ethic and social cohesion that marked earlier working class neighborhoods is largely gone. Instead, anomie prevails. The growth of predatory payday loan operations in declining neighborhoods is symptomatic of the breakdown of the informal social networks that used to reduce the dangers of working class life. Simultaneously, the thinning out of civil society, (churches, little league, scouting, labor unions, volunteer groups like the Red Cross, etc; the "Bowling Alone" phenomenon) is linked to a marked increase in social pathologies like drug addiction, semi-permanent unemployment, and petty criminality. It's every man for himself in an environment marked by a pernicious social Darwinism. Many Americans are one paycheck from disaster.

Those that were paying attention could discern the desperation of those left behind by America’s globalized, technologically dynamic economy. Angus Deacon, a Nobel Prize winner in economics, and Ann Case, a professor at Princeton, recently produced a paper showing that only one American demographic, white male non-college graduates, actually has a rising mortality rate. The principal cause is a 330% increase in "suicide by alcohol and opiate poisoning." There is a genuine crisis in the white working class, which the Democratic party, traditionally the advocate of American workers, has consistently ignored. The real as opposed to the symbolic issues of the dispossessed were consistently marginalized. For all her talk of “working families”, Hillary Clinton could not convince important segments of the high school educated working class that she understood their plight. They were more interested in survival than in gun control, greenhouse gases or Putin’s intervention in Syria.

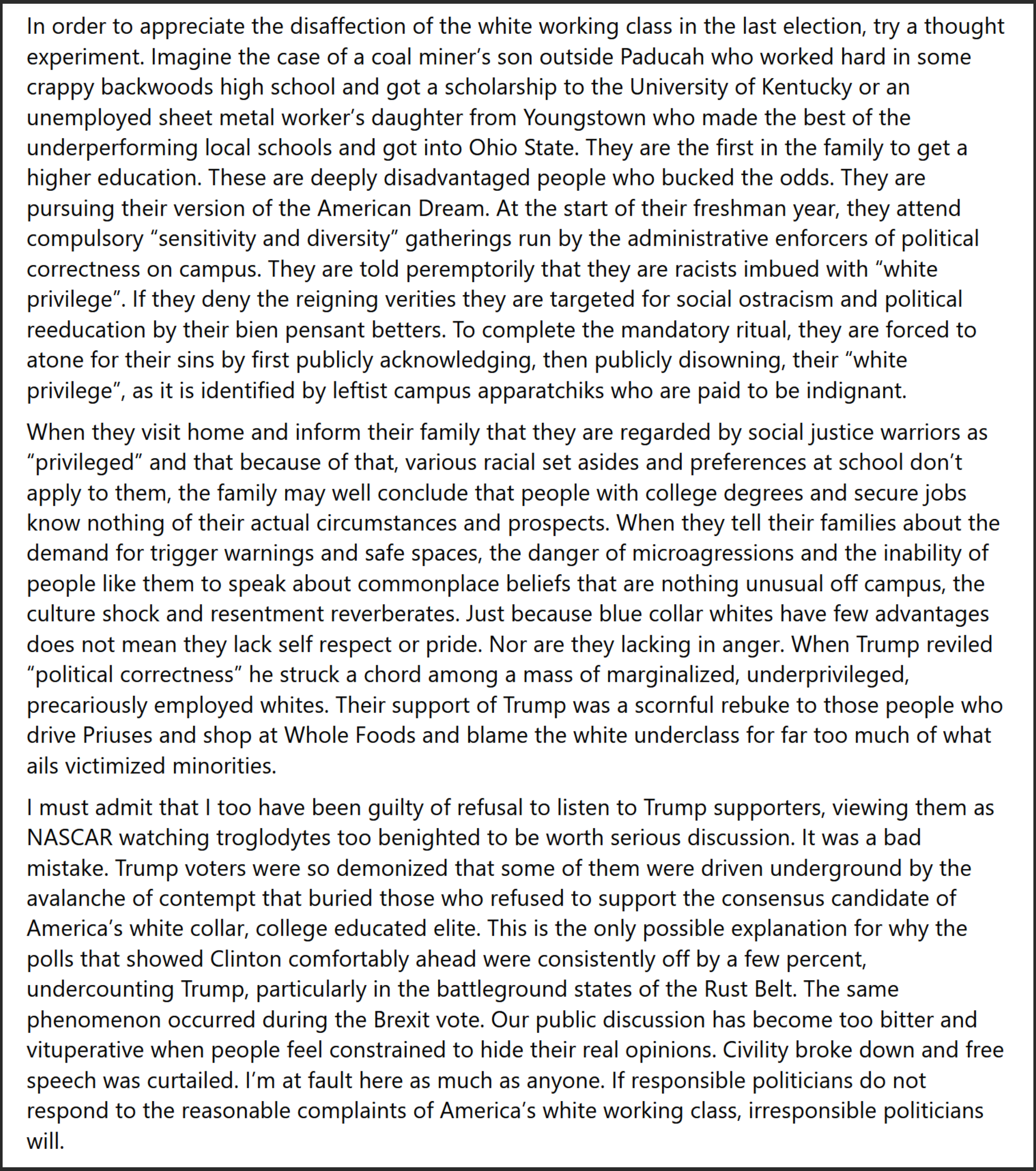
Hillary Clinton was an obviously flawed candidate, especially due to the ineradicable perception of avarice, cronyism and corruption. “Its my turn” is not a reason to be president. It is worth noting that she has never been a natural politician like Bill Clinton. She correctly made the strategic decision to move her candidacy to the left to combat the populist socialism of Bernie Sanders. After securing the nomination she blundered by failing to triangulate back to the middle of American politics, underestimating the importance of the white working class in favor of an appeal to Bernie Sanders’ progressive milennials. She often came off as inauthentic, patronizing and effete, because she has always lacked the common touch that came so easily to her husband. Bill Clinton, who is a genuine product of the white working class, has always had far better political instincts than his wife, who is an icon of progressive middle class propriety.

“Black Lives Matter” was Hillary Clinton’s “Sister Soulja” moment. Politically correct, cold and calculating, she blew her crucial, once in a lifetime opportunity because her political instincts were never as acute as her husband’s. Bill Clinton would have stood his ground, knowing intuitively that rank and file white Democrats wanted reassurance that the party was not held hostage by radical minority movements and that their concerns would receive respectful consideration proportionate to their electoral importance. Hillary Clinton did not seize this opportunity. After a series of BLM demonstrations targeting the two Democratic frontrunners, Bernie Sanders made the obvious and innocuous claim that “All lives matter”. Abetted by a partisan ratings driven media that were more interested in entertainment than information, a small but highly visible fringe element of America’s black population excoriated Senator Sanders for “insensitivity”, which is, as a matter of course to those who know the protocol, a prelude to America’s omnibus term of abuse for those who disagree with black radicals: racism. The suggestion that Senator Sanders is racist is preposterous, but Hillary Clinton and her handlers saw blood in the water. She moved to outflank Senator Sanders on the left as she had done on gun control.

Bernie quickly caved into pressures from BLM, apologizing profusely for his insensitivity and begging forgiveness. Hillary couldn't stand the possibility of being seen as less sensitive than her opponent, (which in contemporary politics is the ultimate virtue), so she pandered to BLM ostentatiously, treating Sanders with a supercilious, maiden aunt "more sensitive than thou" disapproval. When the white working class heard the Democrats distance themselves from the harmless proposition that "All lives matter", bowing and scraping and apologizing for the alleged "racism" of what was at worst an innocuous truism, they felt disregarded and dismissed. They took this as an indication that the Democrats did not believe their lives mattered, that loud radical fringe groups mattered more than them.

The progressive Democrats' scorched earth approach to the culture wars alienated much of the working class. They have won the culture wars, but they are lacking in pragmatism and did not know where to stop. The moralistic condescension over transgender issues affronted the values of many residents of North Carolina, which Trump unexpectedly won. Many working class Democrats in North Carolina who viewed themselves as "ordinary people" resented what they regarded as the normalizing of the abnormal and the lionizing of a miniscule percentage of the population that they regarded as mentally ill. Simultaneously, their values were calumniated. The grossly disproportionate Democratic focus on peripheral symbolic issues like transgenderism, which speaks to a tiny fraction of the population and is largely a solution in search of a problem, repulsed much of the white working class. North Carolina is not Massachusetts. It is not surprising that Trump took North Carolina. As the leftist filmmaker Michael Moore put it, Trumpism is the disrespected white working class giving the middle finger to arrogant elites.

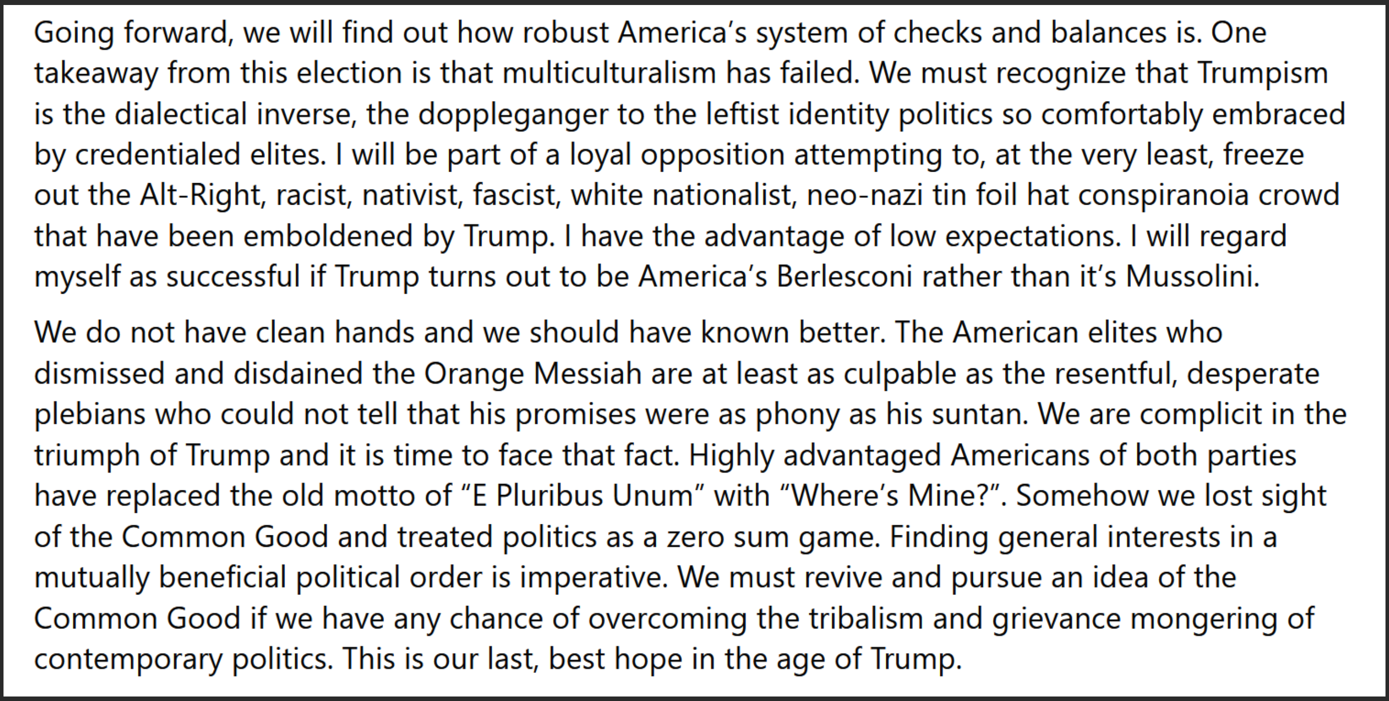
Ask yourself, how many people in North Carolina have read Foucault and are interested in "queer theory", compared to the number of factory workers anxious about making ends meet on eleven dollars an hour or the number of those who have been shocked by a the suicide of a neighbor whose mortgage was foreclosed or the number of those who are worried about a friend whose son is hooked on prescription painkillers. It appears that white working class North Carolinians saw the cultural concerns of the national Democratic party as defining deviancy down coupled with a worse than indifferent attitude toward a large and downwardly mobile segment of the population: rural and small town America. This may well have, mutatis mutandis, caused the Democrats to lose Florida, which had an unexpectedly large turnout in the rural, Republican, panhandle.



In order to appreciate the disaffection of the white working class in the last election, try a thought experiment. Imagine the case of a coal miner's son outside Paducah who worked hard in some crappy backwoods high school and got a scholarship to the University of Kentucky or an unemployed sheet metal worker's daughter from Youngstown who made the best of the underperforming local schools and got into Ohio State. They are the first in the family to get a higher education. These are deeply disadvantaged people who bucked the odds. They are pursuing their version of the American Dream. At the start of their freshman year, they attend compulsory "sensitivity and diversity" gatherings run by the administrative enforcers of political correctness on campus. They are told peremptorily that they are racists imbued with "white privilege". If they deny the reigning verities they are targeted for social ostracism and political reeducation by their bien pensant betters. To complete the mandatory ritual, they are forced to atone for their sins by first publicly acknowledging, then publicly disowning, their "white privilege", as it is identified by leftist campus apparatchiks who are paid to be indignant.

When they visit home and inform their family that they are regarded by social justice warriors as "privileged" and that because of that, various racial set asides and preferences at school don't apply to them, the family may well conclude that people with college degrees and secure jobs know nothing of their actual circumstances and prospects. When they tell their families about the demand for trigger warnings and safe spaces, the danger of microagressions and the inability of people like them to speak about commonplace beliefs that are nothing unusual off campus, the culture shock and resentment reverberates. Just because blue collar whites have few advantages does not mean they lack self respect or pride. Nor are they lacking in anger. When Trump reviled "political correctness" he struck a chord among a mass of marginalized, underprivileged, precariously employed whites. Their support of Trump was a scornful rebuke to those people who drive Priuses and shop at Whole Foods and blame the white underclass for far too much of what ails victimized minorities.

I must admit that I too have been guilty of refusal to listen to Trump supporters, viewing them as NASCAR watching troglodytes too benighted to be worth serious discussion. It was a bad mistake. Trump voters were so demonized that some of them were driven underground by the avalanche of contempt that buried those who refused to support the consensus candidate of America's white collar, college educated elite. This is the only possible explanation for why the polls that showed Clinton comfortably ahead were consistently off by a few percent, undercounting Trump, particularly in the battleground states of the Rust Belt. The same phenomenon occurred during the Brexit vote. Our public discussion has become too bitter and vituperative when people feel constrained to hide their real opinions. Civility broke down and free speech was curtailed. I'm at fault here as much as anyone. If responsible politicians do not respond to the reasonable complaints of America's white working class, irresponsible politicians will.



Going forward, we will find out how robust America's system of checks and balances is. One takeaway from this election is that multiculturalism has failed. We must recognize that Trumpism is the dialectical inverse, the doppleganger to the leftist identity politics so comfortably embraced by credentialed elites. I will be part of a loyal opposition attempting to, at the very least, freeze out the Alt-Right, racist, nativist, fascist, white nationalist, neo-nazi tin foil hat conspiranoia crowd that have been emboldened by Trump. I have the advantage of low expectations. I will regard myself as successful if Trump turns out to be America's Berlesconi rather than it's Mussolini.

We do not have clean hands and we should have known better. The American elites who dismissed and disdained the Orange Messiah are at least as culpable as the resentful, desperate plebians who could not tell that his promises were as phony as his suntan. We are complicit in the triumph of Trump and it is time to face that fact. Highly advantaged Americans of both parties have replaced the old motto of "E Pluribus Unum" with "Where's Mine?". Somehow we lost sight of the Common Good and treated politics as a zero sum game. Finding general interests in a mutually beneficial political order is imperative. We must revive and pursue an idea of the Common Good if we have any chance of overcoming the tribalism and grievance mongering of contemporary politics. This is our last, best hope in the age of Trump.

END

Mike and Peter in the younger days.